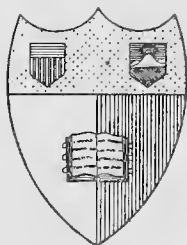




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THE ROYAL COMMISSION AT SAMARAI.

CENTRE—Col. the Hon. J. A. K. MACKAY, C.B., M.L.C. (Chairman).  
 RIGHT—Mr. Justice C. E. HERBERT (Commissioner). MR. E. HARRIS (Secretary).  
 LEFT—Mr. W. E. PARRY-OKEDEN, I.S.O. (Commissioner), GEORGE BELFORD.

[Frontispiece.

# ACROSS PAPUA

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF A VOYAGE ROUND, AND A  
MARCH ACROSS, THE TERRITORY OF PAPUA, WITH  
THE ROYAL COMMISSION

BY

COLONEL KENNETH MACKAY  
C.B., M.L.C.

*Author of "The Yellow Wave," "Out Back," etc.*

WITH FORTY PLATES FROM PHOTOGRAPHS, AND A  
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TO  
MY ONE TIME COLLEAGUES  
AND  
FOR ALL TIME FRIENDS.

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## PREFACE.

HAVING always felt a deep interest in the dark races, I was naturally anxious to visit Papua, and eventually my opportunity came in a manner totally unexpected and by a path hedged with responsibility; the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth Government asking me to accept the position of Chairman of a Royal Commission brought into being (to quote the letters patent) "to inquire into and report upon the present conditions, including the methods of Government, of the territory now known as British New Guinea, and the best means for their improvement."

My colleagues, under either of whom I take this opportunity of stating I would have considered it an honour to serve, were William Edward Parry-Okeden, Esq., I.S.O., a gentleman who had held high official positions, including that of Chief Commissioner of Police in Queensland, and who, in addition to a matured departmental knowledge, had long and intimate experience both of our native races and the Kanaka problem, and Charles Edward Herbert, Esq., at one time Member for, and now Judge and Resident of, our vast Northern

Territory, and consequently of necessity, as well as by virtue of his exceptional powers of observation, closely conversant with tropical and aboriginal conditions.

Thus the Commissioners were drawn from parts of Australia, hundreds (in the case of Judge Herbert thousands) of miles apart, and, as a not unnatural consequence, were all personally unknown to each other, when on 27th August, 1906, his Excellency Lord Northcote, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, signed the letters patent giving them official status as the Papuan Royal Commission.

The causes which led up to this step on the part of the then Government were many and complex, and appear to me to have had their roots in a period somewhat remote from the present. Prior to 1883 more or less irresponsible exploring and gold prospecting expeditions fired alike the imaginations and the cupidity of adventurous spirits with their accounts of its mineral richness and tropical beauty ; but in that year Sir Thomas McIlwraith, Premier of Queensland, lifted Papua into the domain of political and national problems by annexing it to Queensland, giving, among other reasons for his statesmanlike action, this unanswerable one, "That the establishment of a foreign Power in the neighbourhood of Australia would be injurious to British, and more particularly to Australian, interests."

Unfortunately, the Imperial authorities professed to think otherwise—possibly, they did not take the trouble to think at all—or it may be that Australian interests were as yet of too little importance to weigh against possible friction nearer home. Be that as it may, the net result to Australia is the presence of a great foreign and naval Power (which to-day seems to have the whole British Empire in a condition of watchfulness) within a week's steam of her sea-board.

In 1884 a British Protectorate was proclaimed over part of New Guinea ; and on September 4th, 1888, the Administrator, Dr. McGregor, officially declared this portion to be a British possession.

The name of Sir William McGregor will ever be remembered in connection with New Guinea as that of a ruler who combined, both as regards natives and whites, firmness with justice; and under him an official system began which did far better work than might reasonably have been expected, when some of the material he had to work on is considered. It is hard to make bricks without straw ; yet, officially and financially, that is practically what successive Administrators have been asked to do, from the days of the Protectorate down to the advent of the Royal Commission.

Why McGregor stood alone lay in the fact that he rose in the main superior to adverse conditions, and proved that it was possible to do fine work

with a staff in the main more or less hopeless, although certainly leavened by one or two highly capable and self-sacrificing officers.

With his departure, antagonistic elements in the public service, held in check by his commanding personality, gradually began to re-awaken until the officials of the Territory practically lived in two hostile camps.

Meanwhile the problem of white settlement slowly but surely began to assert its claims to more consideration than it had received in the past. Rightly or wrongly, many of the white population held that under the Crown Colony *régime*, and also under that of the Commonwealth, Papua had been, and was being, governed solely as a close preserve for the native race, and that little or no attention was given by officials to agricultural or mineral development—indeed that white settlement was discouraged rather than welcomed.

Rumours of official friction, of interminable delays in land matters, and of civil discontent with existing conditions roused the attention of certain members of the Federal Parliament; questions were asked on the floor of the House, and eventually on July 4th, 1906, Captain F. R. Barton, the Administrator, wrote to the Prime Minister asking for the appointment of a Royal Commission. This course was adopted by the Government on the 27th of August, 1906, but

whether in response to his request or for other reasons I naturally have no knowledge.

Accompanied by the Commission's secretary—Mr. Herbert Harris—I sailed from Sydney on the s.s. *Guthrie* on the 1st of September, 1906, being joined by Mr. Parry-Okeden at Brisbane and Judge Herbert at Cairns. At Cairns we transhipped to the *Malaita*, arriving at Port Moresby, the official capital of Papua, on Thursday the 13th of September, 1906.

From then on till we reached Brisbane on December 6th, 1906, we sailed round the whole coastline, and visited all the important groups of the territory, including a march from Buna Bay across the island and over the Owen Stanley Range to Port Moresby.

Evidence was taken on the *Merrie England*, in mission houses, stores, government stations, on the diggings, and in the open on the crest of a mountain 5,000 feet above the sea—one of our camps on the overland trip.

This, of necessity, meant that I had to scribble down the following impressions after the day's work was done, in all sorts of places, and at all sorts of times, which must be my excuse for their sketchy character and want of continuity of purpose.

I have naturally not touched on the real work of the Commission—that will be found in the Official Report—and wherever I have brought

officials into the story of our wanderings it has been to speak of them as I found them, by the camp-fire, and on the march, and quite irrespective of the standpoint of a Commissioner.

KENNETH MACKAY.

*Legislative Council,*  
*Sydney,*

July 26th, 1909.



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*Map of Papua, showing Author's Route, folded in at end of book*

## CHAPTER I.

### SYDNEY TO PORT MORESBY.

The Popular View of Papua—I Board the Good Ship *Guthrie*—The Life a Sailor Yearns for—Far Hills are Ever Green—I Meet a Colleague—Inside the Barrier—Whitsunday Pass—Townsville—Why Bustle?—Our Trinity is Completed—A Man of Many Parts—Cairns—North Queensland Hill Station—The Barron Falls—Our New Company—Cooktown—No Man's Enemy but His Own—Papuan Patriotism—Papua Rises from the Sea.

HAD I taken seriously all that was told to me, both with regard to the climate and diseases of Papua, and the peculiar, not to say truculent, tendencies of certain of its inhabitants, I would have felt like begging the Prime Minister to change the objective of the Commission to Guatemala or some such peaceful and truthful health resort. Nor did most I had read help to discount the prophecies of my friends. For instance, the following quotation from a work by D'Albertis came as a cold douche to a man who had never walked while a horse was available, and who knew that he had one eighty-mile tramp ahead of him, with a big probability of several others:—"It is easier to ascend the highest peaks of the European Alps with an alpenstock, than to cross an ordinary hill in New Guinea."

I may say that later, when crawling over the Owen Stanley Range, I fully realised why the

brilliant Italian naturalist and explorer had let his vivid southern imagination get the better of him.

Having occasion to call on a Sydney doctor, loved by reason of his kindly heart and ever ready help, he put me in a chair wherein a lotus-eater might dream, gave me a cigar whose every ring framed a vision of peace and safe content, and then let himself go on the subject of Papuan malaria. Sitting surrounded by all that makes a man count life worth retaining, he told me that he had sailed many seas, but that from all he had heard of it, and a few specimens it had been his good fortune to see, the malarial microbe of New Guinea was an easy first as a man killer, and brushing aside my hope (based on previous experiences in fever countries) that I was immune, proceeded to tell me of a man who had come to him from Samarai a yellow wreck, and had died within the past week. But he gave me a specific at parting, of which we drank large quantities, and as none of us contracted anything more deadly than skinned heels, we christened it after him. On the eve of departure, I was visited by a veritable son of the sea—one who had sailed up rivers and over reefs on every face of Papua, who had explored, traded, and written a book; and as a result of his experiences he told me that the best way to make the natives God-fearing and useful members of society was to teach them the shorter catechism, and further that while it was humanly possible to find the truth as



far north as Cooktown, from there on the telling of it was a lost art.

So, one stormy afternoon, with scarce an illusion left, I boarded the *Guthrie*, found Harris, our secretary, and resigned myself to do without food for a few days. Before we reached the lightship, however, the squalls had died away, and the harbour, with its plenitude of gardens, looked superb as we went out. On every height windows helioed flashes of farewell, and once more as we passed between the rock-faced gates and steamed into the open sea, it came to me that the man who ever left so good an anchorage to sail in troubled waters was a restless fool with a distorted conception of when he was well off.

Outside, each stroke of our propeller drove us into calmer waters, and when morning broke we were floating on a summer sea; and all day long a picturesque coast line, backed by bold ranges, gave change and colour to the picture.

Why is it that sailors always want to be farmers? Probably because they draw their inspiration from the village scenes so optimistically portrayed on the stage. But be that as it may, the fact remains that all the officers of the *Guthrie* yearned for the "simple life," and the Captain would gladly leave his graphic descriptions of the wonderful temple ruins of Java to hang on the lips of any man who chanced to open out on sub-soiling or a new breed of hens. Good fellows one and all—

may the gods be never so unkind as to grant them their desire, for a dream-farm is a beautiful and restful vision, but a real one is a "demnition grind."

A day on board showed me that the East had been "a-calling," and that she had not called in vain, for all were Orient bound. A young Victorian mining engineer, to join his brother in far Burmese hills—and he was such a clean-souled, straight-limbed boy, that I grudged him to so fickle a mistress. A pearl fisher, two surveyors for the Straits Settlements, a planter for Sumatra, another for Java, and just one gentle little girl off a Victorian farm, going out all by herself to make a planter happy somewhere beyond Singapore. They were all bound for the shining East, and I doubt if one of them quite realised how good a land he was leaving behind; but some day, God send, they will remember and come back to us, and we will welcome them, for only stout hearts go out through all the earth and over every sea in answer to the world-old call. And those of them who return have strengthened their thews and broadened their souls, and so are better able to bear the burdens of nationhood.

We were lying at Pinkenba Wharf, Brisbane, and I was sitting on a deck-chair watching some punts go by, when Okeden, one of the men I would live with, think with, and possibly disagree with, for some months, came on board. A typical bush-

man, tall, thin, wiry, with the long thigh, and the clean cut fighting face of a cavalry Colonel, and with a world of kindness in his eyes, and a saving sense of humour hovering about his mouth. He just walked into my life as one who treads familiar ways, and I knew him as one who knows a friend of old days, no matter what dust of years may lie between.

A day out from Brisbane found us inside the Barrier Reef, sailing over a sea of silver, and when off Mackay we saw the sun go down behind Percy Island, the home of an old Colonel who, his life work done, there waits the last reveille. Nor do I wonder at his choice, for the scene was surpassingly lovely. A sea of glass, and out beyond an island mystic, beautiful, crowned with pines and rugged with towers of rock, and scarred with deep cut ravines—above gold-circled clouds, and glowing through their dusky mantles the great red sun, polished and round as some old Titan's shield. For a little it hung twixt cloud-line and hill-crest, and then plunged from sight amid a blaze of radiant colour, leaving behind bright fragments of its glory in a splendid afterglow.

That night, before turning in, I asked the officer of the watch to call me when we were entering Whitsunday Pass. When he did I regretted my after-dinner enthusiasm to commune with nature at 4 a.m. in pyjamas. I further regarded the officer as unnecessarily officious, but never give a

sailor a chance to rout you out in the middle of the night. I fancy he cannot resist relieving the monotony of his vigil by hearing you swear. But when I got the sleep out of my eyes I realised that they were opening on a vision splendid.

Sentinel islands kept watch and ward on either side, as we moved on over a waterway still as the night itself. Then, sun rose, and moon set, and one shore was a realm of golden light, and one was shadow-land just tipped by the sinking moon's silver beams.

After breakfast we passed a white-sailed schooner showing up against the background of another fairy island, and when she was hull down we were still steaming over a summer sea.

At Townsville we got ashore for a leg-stretch. I understand that the present leader of the Queensland opposition is largely responsible for the port, which, according to his opponents, should be somewhere else ; anyway, a majority of the people swear by Philp. The god of the winds is apparently anti-Philp, as he has made several energetic attempts to blow Townsville into the sea.

We lunched at a very fine hotel facing the beach, of which Mrs. McLurcan was once high priestess. I am told that gourmets still regard it as a holy place. Philp has made many laws ; Mrs. McLurcan has written a cookery book ; one rests his claim to remembrance on a people's political

gratitude, the other on a nation's stomach. Mrs. McLurgan thou hast chosen the surest path to immortality!

Still sailing over calm and beautiful seas we dropped anchor off Cairns, the while I more than ever realised what a fair heritage we Australians possess. The further north we go the more are we impressed with the fact that if the sea-board inhabitants do not possess "the calm of Vere de Vere," in its Tennysonian meaning, they have at least come to the unalterable decision that Gordon was right when he sang that "all hurry is worse than useless."

After leaving us to roll about for hours in an open roadstead, a tender put in an appearance, and shortly a cry arose of "sky pilot." So did our other colleague impress some of our fellow-passengers, for it was Herbert who stood by the man at the wheel! Something in the cut of his coat collar must have deceived, for there was little to suggest the twentieth-century cleric in the thin, silent man who stepped aboard and made our party officially complete, just as each day onward he entered into and became more and more an indispensable element in our trinity of friendship.

After an exchange of honest God-speeds with all on board the *Guthrie*, we put off in a tender for a German liner closer in shore, and once alongside of her I obtained painful personal evidence that if the principle of "one man one job" may

be carried to a logical absurdity, the reverse as here represented by one captain, mate, bo'sun, deck-hand, and boy rolled into an energetic, excitable, perspiring, cursing whole has certain weaknesses in detail.

As we ran alongside, our captain, dropping his rôle of steersman, dashed from the bridge, and in his capacity of deck-hand, threw over a fender, then, as boy, caught a rope, while as bo'sun he exchanged curses with a nautical person on the other vessel. Meanwhile our boat drifted under a for'ard scupper pipe, and as a passenger may neither touch the wheel, nor shout an order down into the engine room, I had to watch helplessly the humiliating spectacle of my luggage being drenched with German bilge water. On the whole, I think, individualism can be carried too far.

Cairns is practically level with the sea, the tropical trees in and about it lifting it above the ordinary bush township, but that is all. The approach from the ocean is rather fine, high hills guarding the flanks of the roadstead and backing the town itself. Commercially it is very much alive, owing to the mineral, timber, and agricultural riches, of which it is the distributor.

Having a day to put in, we took the evening train for Kuranda, the local hill station. The trip up is both interesting and picturesque, being nearly all tropical, and with, for a time, splendid panoramic views astern of the rich lowlands,

strongly reminiscent of parts of India ; and out beyond, the sea, with (to-day) the old *Guthrie* floating on it. The railway passes a beautiful, but small, fall ; skirts the valley down which the Barron river flows, and passes the falls themselves just before reaching the station.

We stayed at a comfortable, if unpretentious, weatherboard hotel, built on a rise just in front of a lovely stream, with a foreground of ridges covered with dense tropical forest, where one sees the banyan and rich foliated milk tree, from which, when tapped, streams of fluid gush out. Here also grow palms, banana trees, and, near at hand, coffee. 'Tis the home of the paw paw, grenadilla, loquat, and mango tree, while on every hand are rich tropical blossoms. Hibiscus, bougainvillea, and great white bell-flowers, breathing perfume, delicate and sensuous—a garden to rest and dream in, a grove in which to offer up incense at the shrine of love.

The Barron Falls are different from those in our mountains, in that they flow on the face of sloping rocks from summit to base, and so are white with foam in all their downward course. The gorge on either side is rich in foliage, and during the rainy season the effect must be inspiring, when the rocks re-echo the roar and thunder of the waters' voices as they rush downward to the sea.

There is a beautiful creeper here with a delicate lavender flower, which one sees through the

dining-room windows. In truth, all things here are beautiful, for the warm blood of the tropics is in their veins.

Our fellow-lodgers suggested little out of the common, and we would have gone our several ways unknowing and unknown, save that Herbert had his word doubted as to the height of the falls by an old Scotchman, with the result that the latter, at any rate, will probably regard Herbert in particular, and all Australians in general, as ripe and ready liars.

It is difficult to draw a comparison between the scenery of Kuranda and that of our Blue Mountains; but, wherever such comparison is possible, it appears to me that the mountains completely overshadow the Queensland Hill Station alike in broad expansiveness and rugged grandeur.

Among our new passengers we found a labour recruiter, a missionary and his wife, a widow going to visit the various Mission Stations of Papua, and the lady journalist we had been expecting to meet ever since leaving Sydney, so we steamed out from Cairns with all the *dramatis personæ* necessary for an up-to-date South Sea Island melodrama of a moral and moving character.

A night out, and we were at Cooktown, a hot, not too stirring port, but still full of interest as the spot where Cook careened and repaired his



vessel, and fortunate in possessing a monument to the memory of Mrs. Watson and the story of her heroic death on a lonely atoll not far away.

Here we spent a hot hour or so in buying forgotten but necessary trifles, and watching one of our party making masterly but ineffective efforts to lose one of that hopeless brigade which are popularly but erroneously dubbed "no men's enemies but their own." What cheap and lying begging of the real question is this. Ask miserable wives, starving children, robbed mothers, and victimised friends if this be a fair epitaph for a life of weak and selfish indulgence.

As we left the wharf we saw a crew of fuzzy-headed Papuans gazing after us, for they knew we were bound to the island that was in their hearts, waking and sleeping. Indeed, so strong is their love for their mother-land, that when a steamer that is bringing them back nears it they will crowd her bow and gaze out for hours across the water for a first glimpse of its bold and cloud-crowned mountains. I would that every countryman of mine loved his land as well.

The captain of the *Malaita* was a *raconteur* of no mean order, and a most genial fellow to boot. His officers were all pleasant comrades, and one I found to be the son of an old friend of my early bush days, while Miss Gullet (the lady journalist) had enough vivacity and enthusiasm to make a

centenarian feel young, or to transform a saint into a human being. But still, once we got outside the barrier, I left them all and lived the simple life—and practised not only the no-breakfast theory but the “no food at all” theory, till blue mountain crests showing skyward through veils of mist told us that Papua was rising out of the Coral Sea.

## CHAPTER II.

### PORT MORESBY—PAST AND PRESENT

Port Moresby—Papua's First Explorers—Sir Thomas McIlwraith's Annexation—Murderers as Porters—"George"—A Unique Gaol—Two Native Villages—The Sago Lakatois—Where One Who Deserved a Better Fate Died—Among the Villages—The First Convert—In Front of the Camera—The Legend of "The Great and Gracious Tree"—Our Fiery Steeds—Matrimonial Disabilities—A Native Dandy—A Painting from Nature's Gallery—A Papuan Sunset.

RIDING at anchor, we had a distant view of Government House, a most unpretentious bungalow, more suggestive of an early squatter's home than the one time official head-quarters of a pro-consul, such as Sir William McGregor was; and yet, when later I got to know the man through those who served under him, just the sort of house I would expect him to live in, for one, so austere, simple on his expeditions, and so indifferent to, or contemptuous of, official state as to face a Brisbane garden party in blue sand shoes and a frock coat, could have little use for more than four walls and a roof. On one flank of Government House, and nearer the shore, the Mission showed over a huddled-up native village, but except for this village, and a few cocoa-nut and banana trees, little else suggested tropical surroundings. Port Moresby itself, built on the right hand slopes of the hills as the harbour is entered, and now beginning

to grow out towards the gaol, over on to the flats that fringe Ela Beach, consists of a small collection of official offices and dwellings, two stores, and one public house, and is in no sense architecturally beautiful.

Once ashore, we took up our quarters in a house set on the side of a hill about a mile from the town, and facing the open sea. Sitting on the verandah, I watched the waves flowing slowly on a strip of sandy shore, while out beyond a line of light marked the course of the reefs; and thanking God for deliverance from the *Malaita* fell to thinking on the past of this island, which at present so little known, is yet marked out alike by geographical position and natural richness to play no inconsiderable part in Australia's future destiny.

Men, other than English, first sailed Papuan seas, and to-day various islands and bays bear the names of some of these intrepid navigators.

First came Don Jorge de Menesis, who in 1526 was driven to the island by foul weather, stayed on it for a few weeks, and named it Papua, which, according to some, means "curled"; to others, "black hair." Then came another Portuguese, Alvarez de Saavedra, who christened it "Isla del Oro," and I believe that the near future will prove the correctness of his supposition. In 1545 a Spaniard, Ynigo Ortiz de Retez, sailed along its northern coast, and, thinking it resembled the Guinea Coast of Africa, dubbed the island Neuva

Guinea. In 1606 Inis Vaez de Torres sailed on its eastern coasts, and in 1616 a Dutchman named Schouten discovered "burning mountains." Then came Abel Tasman, who explored some of the coast in 1643, while during 1699 Dampier sailed clear round it. Carteret visited the island in 1767, and in 1768 M. de Bougainville, in command of two French ships, sailed the south and east coasts. In 1770 came Cook, confirming the statement that Papua was separate from New Holland (Australia). Captain Edwards touched its shores in 1791, losing the *Pandora* on the Barrier Reef just after. D'Entrecasteau followed in 1792, and in 1793 the East India Company, like the grand old land grabbers they were, annexed Papua, and an island in Geelvink Bay was occupied by soldiers belonging to their service. The occupation was, however, not approved by the English Government. During 1795 Bampton, and in 1804 M. Constance, visited New Guinea, while during 1828 Captain Steenboom took possession of part in the name of the Dutch Government; but after a few years the settlement had to be abandoned owing to its unhealthy nature. In 1845 Captain Blackwood discovered the Fly River, naming it after his ship. During 1846-50 Captain Owen Stanley made a survey of the coast and marked off many of the more important mountains of the range which now bears his name. In 1858 came the Dutch warship, *Etna*, exploring and

surveying, followed by other Dutch expeditions led by Van der Crab, Teysman, Correngei, Lange-weldt, Hemert, and Swann.

It is worthy of more than passing note that almost without exception these practical, and in many cases cultured, navigators speak of the natural possibilities of Papua with enthusiasm, comparing it to some of the richest of the then known tropical islands.

In 1871 the London Missionary Society founded a station on Darnley Island in Torres Straits. From there they established stations between the Baxter and Fly Rivers, at Redscar Bay, and Port Moresby, where in 1874 the veteran missionary leader, Dr. Lawes, took command. So that the whole honour of being the pioneer missionaries of Papua justly belongs to this society, though I believe the Jesuits started a mission on Woodlark Island at an earlier date; but, for some reason unknown to me, it has long ago disappeared.

In 1893 Captain Moresby discovered and gave a name to the present capital; nor do I think I need further trace the course of events which led down to the taking over of Papua by the Commonwealth, for they belong to a period well within the recollection of most men, and are easy of discovery by every schoolboy.

Still, as I consider that every Australian should fully realise Sir Thomas McIlwraith's statesman-like effort on behalf of the safety of our future

race, an effort unfortunately rendered largely futile through the hostility of the British Government of that day, I will quote his reasons given for undertaking to annex Papua to Queensland in 1883.

“1. That its possession would be of value to the Empire, and conduce especially to the peace and safety of Australia, the development of Australian trade, and the prevention and punishment of crime throughout the Pacific.

“2. That the establishment of a foreign Power in the neighbourhood of Australia would be injurious to British, and more particularly to Australian, interests.”

In July of the same year Lord Derby declined to confirm the act of annexation, and in December, 1884, Germany hoisted her flag over the north coast of Papua, and in the Admiralty, Hermit, Anchorite, New Britain, and New Ireland Groups. So to-day and for all time a great military and naval power is established within easy striking distance of Australia's most vulnerable points, in spite of Sir Thomas McIlwraith's patriotic action, and, indeed, I am inclined to think, largely as the result of a desire on the part of the Colonial Office to snub that far-seeing statesman.

Then I was waked out of the past with its quaint old ships and picturesque sea captains, and my musings on what might have been had my Lord Derby's digestive organs only been working

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smoothly, by a clank, clank, that could only come from hobbled horses, or a chain gang, and looking down I saw twenty or more prisoners, most of them shambling in leg-irons, carrying our belongings, and sundry articles of furniture. A majority were not of the best physique, were varied as regards shades of colour, and wore immense mops of hair. I was told that a fair proportion of them were waiting trial for the brutal murder of the only vegetable grower in the place ; but they seemed perfectly indifferent alike to their fate, and the outrage they had committed on the people generally, and indeed chatted and laughed as if fresh vegetables were neither here nor there in their scheme of life.

Mr. Musgrave, the Government Secretary, who came on board as representative for Captain Barton, not only found us a house for which we paid rent to a Bishop, but also "George," and as George was by way of being chef, major-domo, interpreter, medicine man, and Encyclopedia Papuanica, I think that it is only fair to deal with him in detail. Son of a High Chief of Samoa and an Irish woman, at one time a dweller on our Hunter River, then in our pilot service, he drifted to New Guinea, was a digger, a carrier of goods from Buna Bay to the Yodda, and one of Sir William MacGregor's most trusted men, ascended with him the Fly River to the 600 mile camp, and was one of the four to climb with Sir William the



summit of Mount Victoria. Save that his skin was darker, he would have passed for a twin brother of Bill Beach, and while he kept at times our livers active, he was, taking him all in all, a continual feast, and I will ever look back to the weeks we spent together with genuine pleasure.

The gaol at Port Moresby, viewed from a European standpoint, has no more reality about it than the baseless fabric of a dream, for any properly educated criminal could break cells when he liked, for to leave the yard called for nothing more difficult than stepping through a wire fence. Still Head-Gaoler Macdonald told us his children seldom left him, and that when one did the natives almost invariably gave him away, the prisoner being usually from another district; and indeed they would be fools to escape from a man who is in the best sense a firm but kindly father to them all. A majority of the prisoners were doing time for manslaughter, which seems to be a popular form of local crime, and those with skin disease—apparently a majority—were being treated by being steamed in a sulphur box.

Having occasion to visit one of the local stores we found natives lounging under the verandah, indeed in the building itself, and a fair proportion with skin disease. We then rode round the harbour shore to visit the two villages that lie side by side below the Queensland Mission Society Station. These provide a striking illustration

alike of Papuan custom and the multiplicity of dialects which there obtain, for though it is difficult to determine where one village begins and the other ends, yet their people speak two languages and follow different occupations, one tribe being fishermen and the other agriculturists.

The view over the bay, with ranges rising in the distance, the harbour entrance guarded by an island, and the thatched-roofed villages and cocoa-nut and plaintain groves, backed by treeless sharp-cut hills, made up a picture still only semi-tropical but possessing a rare charm of its own. The village houses were all built on poles rising out of the water, with floors about ten feet above the ground, their roofs and walls being of thatch, and obviously whole families slept in practically the one room. They mark a clear stage of development as compared to the primitive mia-mias of our Australian aborigines, but in no sense compare with the well-built and scrupulously clean kraals of many of the Rhodesian and other uncontaminated African tribes. Each house was hung about with charms, and the women and men, whether making earthen pots, mending fishing-gear, or playing cat's-cradle, seemed listless and inert, and just about as superstitious, and probably more dirty than before the white man came. It is only fair, however, to point out that these villages, being beside a seaport, have probably been demoralised





LAKATOI, PORT MORESBY.

by frequent contact with some of the scum of the earth.

We were amused with the swagger of the young women, many of whom were pretty, with light, well-rounded limbs, and a splendid carriage. They walked with a wriggle, amazingly like that affected by some of our 'Arriets, and were, I should say, born coquettes. Like most tropical races, they mature and fade with hot-house rapidity, all traces of beauty generally disappearing after the birth of their second child, and old age claiming them before thirty. The single bucks seeking wives are great dandies, with frizzed-out hair, many ornaments, and flowers set in hair, ears, and armlets—just young blades all the world over, but with fewer clothes than most. The old men and women were miserable wrecks, skinny and ugly, while all were, I am sadly afraid, ignorant of cleanly habits as we understand the term.

When we arrived, all the local natives were short of food, partly no doubt owing to the somewhat barren soil, and want of rain, but principally, I fear, to cultivated laziness, and primitive methods. All the sea-board villages were also preparing lakatois in which to sail away down the coast as far as two hundred and fifty miles westward, to obtain sago in exchange for dogs' teeth, and earthen pots which the women make. These trading craft consist of four canoes, each

about thirty feet long, lashed together and surrounded by reed bulwarks, platforms being built on stem and stern. The lakatois are provided with deck houses to keep out rain, and one or two fibre sails of singularly picturesque shape, and carry from thirty to forty men.

Before starting on an expedition, which lasts from three to four months—as they can only sail with the wind, and so go out on one trade, and come back on another—the voyagers deck their masts with charms and sail and pole about the bay with young girls dancing at the prow of each rude galleon; and so the old gods still laugh at the Mission house standing at the village gates.

We rode up past a great deep-foliaged rubber tree to Government House. It faces the Bay entrance and the Coral Sea, and here, one morning as dawn was breaking, a young man marched from under the flag that floats from a knoll on its front, out over “the great divide,” just because he had no friend to hearten him, and stood in this supreme hour of his travail deserted, and alone. That he was too young for the position of responsibility thrust upon him is probable, but that, having accepted it, he strained every nerve to carry out his work is amply proved by the brief records of those days, and I absolutely believe that the events which ended so tragically for him were the direct result of over anxiety on his part to do his





NATIVES AT PARI.



duty. For a moment he lost his head, as greater men have done before and will do again, and then the hysteria of well-intentioned men, and the cold aloofness of others who by every law of loyalty and comradeship should have rallied round him, turned an admittedly most regrettable mistake on his part into a tragedy totally unwarranted by any blunder he may have made.

When one calls to mind the "purple patches" smeared on the face of Papua by some of her most experienced officials, dubbed, and I take it generally justly so, regrettable but necessary incidents, and when one takes the trouble to think how often the innocent must have suffered not only with, but for, the guilty, the attitude taken up which culminated in the sacrifice of this young man seems all the more inexplicable. That he was both energetic and courageous the magistrate who was with him during an expedition in the Northern Division has given me ample proof, that the people as a whole respected and believed in him the testimony of many has convinced me, while the diggers in the north, during my visit, were talking of erecting a monument to his memory; and diggers, if rough, know a man when they meet one.

Later we visited the villages of Korabada, Pari, Kira-Kira, and Vapagori. These were all some distance from the port, and their people seemed better in every way than the natives we had so far met, while three out of the four were clean and

well-kept, largely due, I understand, to the resident magistrate, Mr. Bramell, insisting on the carrying out of an ordinance dealing with village sanitation.

At Pari we met Maulai, said to be the first Papuan convert to Christianity, and now a native teacher. He seemed a sensible old fellow, and when I asked him (through George, for he was ignorant of English, although a Christian of over twenty years standing) "where he would have gone after death if he had remained a heathen?" he replied, "God alone can tell that,"—which seemed good, horse sense. He and his wife, both ludicrous in European clothes, entertained us in their native house which was beautifully clean and fragrant with ropes of frangipanni flowers hung on the walls. I often wonder why Easterns and native tribes possess such perverted taste as to discard willingly their graceful national costumes for our hideous clothes. That we should encourage them to do so is an outrage on all hygienic and artistic conceptions.

The younger women were very fine in kilts made of fibre, and when Harris produced his camera, at once drew up in line, being evidently no strangers to the photographic fiend. But this vexed the artistic soul of our secretary, who posed them on and around the village Dubu or sacred temple. This consisted of a platform supported on round posts about six feet high, on one of which an

alligator was carved. Above the platform rose four poles from which, in the old days, doubtless many a head had helplessly grinned.

As we were told that Pari was a Christian village I am not clear as to why the Dubu still remained. Anyway Harris was grateful that no earnest iconoclast had chopped it up for firewood.

We found well-built churches at each village, all the work being done by the native teachers and the inhabitants, and we were told that one village had subscribed over £100 to build their church. It seems that every May the missionaries work up an enthusiastic rivalry among the different villages, with substantial results, which seems to prove that all the world over the easiest way to make men give freely is to "sule" them on to beat the other fellow.

As we rode back, George told me of one of the native conceptions of a future state, which struck me as very beautiful. Up on the Astrolabe Range there blooms, invisible to mortal eye, a great and gracious tree, in and around which dwell forever free from care and happy, all those who have lived good lives ere death claimed them. There lovers and loved relations will be re-united, while those already dwellers beneath its shade may and do come back to watch over the living, so that each soul yet on earth has an unseen but ever present loving guide and helper. The wicked have to pass through sickness, pain and trouble

before they reach the tree, but eventually they, too, are gathered beneath its branches. The natives of the Astrolabe District say they know this sacred idyll is true because those they loved and have lost have come back to them and told them so.

I give the tale as it was told to me; and when one remembers how old the Papuan is, how he has lived on through all the ages that have died, and the upheavals that have made and unmade worlds since the continent of "Lemuria" sank engulfed for ever beneath the waters of the Indian Ocean, it is not hard to understand that he still possesses dim memories of faiths learnt from lost peoples of higher development when the world was younger and perhaps nearer its Creator than it is to-day.

At 2.30 that night we had a shock of earthquake, but I slept through it. Probably I was awake, but just did not notice it, for I had been riding a Papuan horse all the day before, and our horses and saddles were unique. The Commission mounted was a fearful and wonderful procession. Okeden rode the best looking, but it was a thoroughly demoralised brute. Herbert bestrode a grey and angular mare, while my animal kicked me on the heel whenever I applied the spur. Okeden suggested that he was trying to scratch his ear. Maybe he was, only when he tried to do it to both ears at once I had a troublous time.

In this happy land woman is only man's equal



MAULAI, FIRST CHRISTIAN CONVERT IN NEW GUINEA,  
WITH HIS WIFE AND SON, AND MALAGU, VILLAGE CONSTABLE.



in one sense, and in that she is his superior, namely, as a worker. About Port Moresby she appears to monopolise this privilege, and I doubt if she will ever have any difficulty in retaining it. But as a man has to pay his prospective father-in-law so much on betrothal, and a further sum on marriage, or to be more exact, agree to do so when he can, with the result that he as a rule never seems to get out of debt to the old gentleman, he cannot be expected to become an enthusiastic worker.

A young chief we met at Pari came to the house and was photographed in full native dress. He had a coronet of red feathers with yellow tips in his hair. Under this a band of dogs' teeth, and then a garland of frangipanni blossoms, more blossoms in his ears, and two great mother-of-pearl half-moon ornaments about his neck, shells on his breast, armlets with flowers stuck in them, and nothing else on worth mentioning. He was a handsome lad, and looked most picturesque.

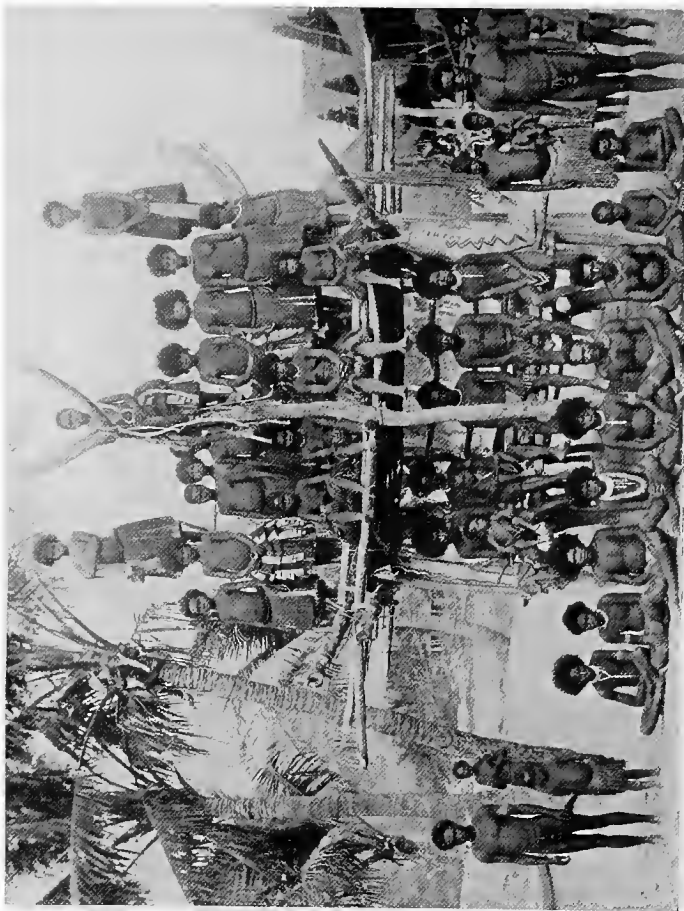
The natives, who all seemed to love flowers, make a very pretty use of their fibre armlets by placing scented blossoms in them on which the lady of their choice may rest her head, the while she listens to love's "old sweet song."

While we were on the wharf one day the sago fleet sailed by, the platforms full of girls, some dancing in a ring with clasped hands, others standing higher, and all whirling their fibre

ramis like skirt dancers, some of their motions being more primal than are usual in our ballets. The men decked in armlets, neck and chest ornaments, and with bird-of-paradise, and other head-dresses, swaying to and fro and chanting to the roll of their drums. It was a glowing picture out of Nature's gallery, set in the changing colours of the coral bay, and framed by the soft brown hills.

That afternoon as we rode back to our home by the sea, we heard that the *Merrie England* was ready to start for Samarai in the morning, and as we sat and smoked, looking out on the sea, the day began to die. Great clouds floated half round our world, cold and leaden hued, its other half a mighty sheet of flame. Out of the still depths of the sea an island rose, clear cut as a cameo, stretching along the sky line, with sharp peaks, fold upon fold, fading into dim distances. And then the clouds became pillars of fire, flushed with rose light and radiant with the gold of the sun god's very heart, then sea, earth, and sky, rock-face, and rugged peak merged into one glorious picture of gloom and glory—and then the night.





NATIVES ON DUBU AT PARL.



## CHAPTER III.

### PORT MORESBY TO KEREPUA—RUBBER PLANTING AND CHRISTIANITY.

The *Merrie England*—Kapa Kapa—Rigo—The Finest House in Papua—Novel Methods of Defence—A Charming Alternative—The Village of Hula—Kerepuna—Old Faiths Die Hard—Striving after the Unattainable—Good Work—On a Mission Verandah—Farewell to Kerepuna.

THE *Merrie England*, our home for many weeks, was originally a private yacht built to resist the buffets of northern seas, and in those days must have carried an immense spread of canvas, for even in their cut-down condition her masts were lofty. Painted white, with graceful lines, and spick and span from brasses to binnacle, she looked a thing of joy as we stepped aboard.

Since she first sailed to the Coral Sea her career has been full of incident. A governor of Queensland has helped to lighten her off a reef inside the barrier, she has scraped coral, and backed off or ploughed through sand-banks from the mouth of the Fly to Mambare Beach. Many men whose names are writ large in the history of Australia, and some with old-world records, have trod her bridge, and tragedy's grim feet have stained her spotless decks, but the morning we sailed out of Port Moresby eastward bound, tragedy was absent

from our thoughts, for Captain Hunter had pledged us his word not to go outside the reef for that day, and it was time enough to think bitterly of the morrow when it came.

What a right good fellow and capable navigator our captain was, and what obliging, careful officers, his chief, and engineers! May they ever remain taut and trim as their gallant little vessel! Then there was "Lamps," a youthful mariner who seemed to do a lot of steering when we left a port, for it is surprising how subject to head-aches full-grown A.B.s are after a day ashore, and good old "Chips," and the cook, a well-intentioned man who, alas! gave us more "food for thought" than all that brave ship's company.

We had as fellow-passengers, Mr. Ballantine, the Treasurer, Mr. Bramell, Resident Magistrate for the Central Division, and George, in charge of Vagi and Thou (our two boys), and commissary general, collector of curios, and *raconteur* rolled into one.

Once round the hill we sailed along shores fringed by mangroves, broken here and there by little sandy beaches and nooks of green foliage, the whole backed by broken ridges and the taller heights of the Astrolabe Range. Here and there villages nestled by the shore. At one called Kapa Kapa we cast anchor. It was built on poles, and stood in the water over 100 yards from the beach, and was an interesting illustration of how the

coast natives protected themselves from the raids of the more warlike bush tribes in the days before Government gave all this part of Papua security for life and property. So marked is this that now a white man might walk from Port Moresby to Samarai in perfect safety.

Piloted by Mr. English, Assistant Resident Magistrate for the district of Rigo, we landed and walked along a good road constructed with native labour by our guide, and lined with cocoa-nut palms, kapok trees, and blossom-laden frangipannis planted by him. This tropical avenue led through a plantation of sisal hemp, and then another of rubber, while great rich-foliaged native trees rose on every side, one beautiful and stately, bearing a fruit not unlike the walnut in shape. Here, too, paw paws grew, and mandarine oranges and coffee.

Strolling up a path flanked by kapok trees, grown from seed imported nine years ago from Java, and now between 50 and 60 feet high, and yielding a product of first-class quality, we reached Mr. English's home.

The house was full of excellent local photography, and on the walls were displayed a collection of clubs and other native weapons, many of which money could not replace to-day; for the native, after recklessly parting in the past with weapons handed down from more industrious ancestors, now—either impelled by a sense of their

value commercially or because of an awakened sentiment—is actually buying club heads and stone axes from the traders, and we found it most difficult, even in the centre of the island, to get genuine weapons or curios of any kind.

The view from the verandah was an ideal one for a planter's bungalow, stretching away over the cultivated areas to the local hills beyond, and as we gazed on the work of his hands and brain its owner told us tales of Chalmers and of McGregor, in whose service he had been, and who had first suggested to him the starting of the plantation that now spread in nearly matured beauty at our feet. Whether or no his official position had given him help which would not have been at the command of a private individual it is not my province to discuss; but of this I feel confident, that he has proved beyond the stage of experiment that rubber, kapok, and sisal hemp will all give commercial results in parts of the Rigo district.

Inland from Rigo he told us there was a large area of lightly timbered country admirably suited for grazing big stock, much of which was not actually required by the natives, and I have little doubt but that horses would do well in this part of Papua.

On our way back to the boat Mr. English showed us a bridge he was constructing with prison labour. All the wood was local and of a





INDIA-RUBBER TREES, KAPA KAPA.



high quality, while the workmanship reflected no little credit on his own ingenuity and skill as an instructor.

The following extract from the official report may prove of interest :—

*Rubber.*—Rubber is indigenous to the country, and when imported from other places grows exceedingly well. Your Commissioners visited a plantation belonging to Mr. English, at Rigo, where they found about 70 acres planted with 12,000 trees, the *Ficus Rigo*, a rubber indigenous to the district. About 50 trees of the *Ficus Elastica* have also been planted, and are growing most vigorously, nor is there any doubt that the whole of the surrounding district is well adapted for its production. Referring to the *Ficus Rigo*, Mr. English says :—“ This is a very hardy tree, thrives well and is easily grown from cuttings, which can be obtained from the surrounding scrubs. It is quite easy after a few acres of this valuable tree is planted to extend the area of them. The lower limbs usually grow aerial roots, and in favourable weather we have cut off these, limbs three or four inches in diameter, and planted them out, with the result that they soon become of like dimensions to trees three or four years old raised from ordinary cuttings. I would strongly recommend the would-be settler to pay some attention to this hardy tree, which seems to be able to survive the severest drought that I have known for the last 24 years. It grows well in the different soils from high water mark, on the edges of salt and clay pans, open country and scrub land, and may be found growing on almost bare rock, while it gives a reasonable return after six years of about 3 lbs. of rubber per tree. The rubber from the *Ficus Rigo*, which I first brought under notice, and placed on the market in London some 12 years ago, was reported on by Messrs. Silver and Co. as being equal to Para rubber, which class of rubber has been sold in Sydney this year at 4s. 4d. per lb.”

Having seen Mr. English's plantation, Your Commissioners entertain no doubt as to the possibility of successful rubber growing in this, and indeed many other parts of Papua, but, in their opinion, the trees on this plantation were planted much too close together. This, however, is a fault often committed, but easy of avoidance by future planters.

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The following is an estimate, compiled on the figures given by a practical planter, of what a rubber plantation of 250 acres should cost to plant and maintain in Papua :—

*Estimate of Cost of Rubber Plantation in Papua.*

250 acres. Trees planted 16 feet by 16 feet.

	£	s.	d.
1. Felling, clearing, and holing, at £1 an acre .. .. .	250	0	0
2. Lining .. .. .	30	0	0
3. Nursery expenses .. .. .	10	0	0
4. Seed, 16 feet by 16 feet; 20 per cent. failure; 5s. 10d. per thousand, say	10	0	0
5. Planting .. .. .	20	0	0
6. Roads and drains .. .. .	40	0	0
7. House for owner or superintendent (of native materials).. .. .	50	0	0
8. Huts for boys .. .. .	100	0	0
9. Tools .. .. .	50	0	0
10. Contingencies .. .. .	150	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£710	0	0

<i>Annual Cost.</i>	£	s.	d.
Interest, 6 per cent. on £710 .. ..	42	12	0
Survey fees .. .. .		<i>nil</i>	
*Rent of land for first ten years ..		<i>nil</i>	
Recruiting—100 boys at, say, £4 per boy, equal to £400 every three years	133	6	8
Labour—100 boys at £3 per annum ..	300	0	0
Supervision .. .. .	300	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total cost per annum .. .. .	£775	18	8
	<hr/>		
Or excluding supervision.. .. .	£475	18	8

\*Rent, first 10 years, nil; second 10 years, not more than 6d. per acre; afterwards, 5 per cent. of unimproved value to be appraised every 20 years.

The estimate of £1 per acre for clearing scrub land appears to your Commissioners to be under-stated, but in support of it, consideration has to be given to the fact that the





SISAL HEMP, KAPA KAPA.

natives are adepts in this class of clearing, and that the wage they ask is infinitesimal as compared with ruling Australian rates.

Before getting on board we visited Vatorata, the London Missionary Society's College built by the late Dr. Lawes, and said to be the finest house in Papua. Mr. Turner, a new arrival from Scotland, was in charge, and treated us to tea on a spacious verandah overlooking a splendid panoramic view, reaching to the sea, on which lay the *Merrie England*. The centre of the building consisted of a large room or hall open at front and back, which appealed to me greatly, but Mr. Turner pointed out that during the winds most things, including the dwellers therein, required to be chained down.

He told me of another missionary with a German name, who with his wife, was stationed thirty or forty miles inland, and who came over in the *Malaita* with us, and from his description I was sorry that I had not met him, but the sea was responsible, not I.

We passed down a double row of huts occupied by native teachers and students, and then said farewell to a man who had received us most courteously, and who seemed to me somewhat lonely—and perhaps it was fancy, but, I thought, a little disillusioned.

Reaching the shore we were carried to our boat, and soon found ourselves in deck chairs looking over at the village and chatting on the days when the canoes now lying on the beach were moored

to its posts each night. The Solomon natives have, I understand, gone one better by building artificial islands on the reefs, on which they have planted cocoa-nut palms, and constructed docks for their canoes, while one chief who chanced to be perilously near the land erected a stockade of upright logs right round his island to prevent the bushmen shooting across. These gentry, who seemed to hold similar views to those of the old Highlanders, were vegetarians, with possible lapses when they caught a coast man.

After dinner Bramell, the Resident Magistrate for the Central Division, gave us the names of the villages and tribes at this end of his division, and the languages spoken by the latter, but I fear that an enumeration would only weary the reader, interesting though it was to me, and then he bade us good night, and going over the side he stepped into an outrigger canoe and was paddled off, as we thought, to Port Moresby; nor was it until many days after that we learned he pulled ashore instead, and straightway married Mrs. English's sister. Well, it seems he had the choice of beginning two journeys that night, and I hope and believe he will never regret the path he took when he rowed away under the stars.

In the morning we went outside the reef, and the *Merrie England* pitched until the spray showered over us on the bridge; then as we came beam-on to get in, rolled till Okeden went over,



NATIVE TEACHERS' QUARTERS, L.M.S., VATORATA.

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chair and all ! When we again got into smooth water, we saw the village of Hula surrounded by cocoa-nut plantations, and I was told one might walk for five miles through nothing else, indeed, all the country from there to Kapa Kapa is suitable for copra raising. At Hula are some of the finest swimmers in the world. Just behind the plantations rise bare but rather picturesque sugar-loaf-topped hills backed by the Owen Stanley mountains.

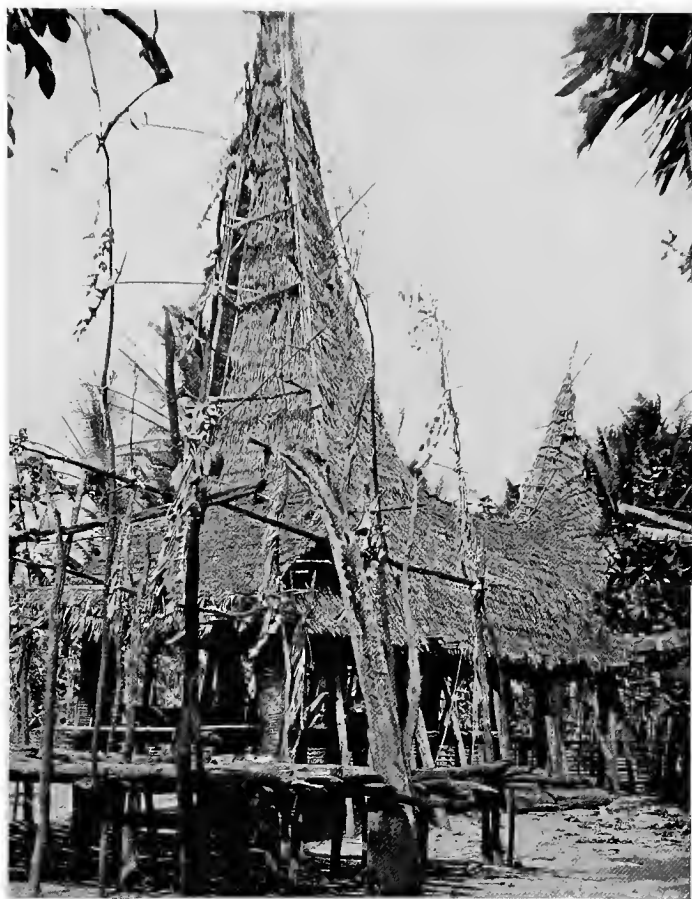
We dropped anchor in the narrow mouth of a big lagoon fringed with palms, mangroves, and other shady trees. At its farther shore rose bare hills, backed by lordlier ranges ; in front the foam line of the reef cut us off from the sea ; on our left cocoa-nut trees stretched away right to Hula ; while on our right, huddled on a narrow tongue of sandy soil, lay the village of Kerepuna, its conical shaped houses built clear of the water, and a Mission house standing on the point by the sea.

On landing, we were met by Mr. Pearse, a stout, cheery old missionary, who showed us over the village. Several tall spires, slightly suggestive in shape of the goporams of Southern India, gave a certain individuality to the place. They marked the abode of the sorcerer, and, I take it, other homes of importance.

The sorcerer's house stood on rudely carved posts—on one of which an alligator was cut. I asked our guide how he thought he would fare in

a trial of strength with his rival, and his answer gave me the distinct impression that he considered the chances would be against him. Once a year this man still stands near the mission house and cries as of old, "I am lord of the sea, crocodiles, sharks, and turtles belong to me," and the people admit it by bringing him his share when any are caught. They still build their houses on high poles, not for protection from mortals, but because they believe spirits cannot climb—and at this season they beat drums at night so that the spirits may dance, and thus, being kept in good humour, give them abundant crops. As we walked, men passed us wearing bunches of white feathers in their hair as tokens that they had killed a man, and behind the mission house we were shown a sacred place where they still spread their nets before fishing for turtle. Indeed, to all intents and purposes, they seemed to be still in the thrall of the old gods. Still I fully believe that Mr. Pearse has put up a good fight during his nineteen years' residence at Kerepuna. It has just been his misfortune to have to strive after the unattainable, though from one Indian philosopher's point of view this should rather be counted his good fortune.

The Papuan is "intensely conservative," to quote Dr. Lawes, while Sir William McGregor considered that "they have not as yet been deeply impressed by the truths of the Gospel,



SORCERER'S HOUSE, KEREPUA.

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to religious fervour they are strangers, while generally they cannot be said to be devotees to the Church, or to be otherwise than indifferent to her teaching."

My observation, certainly limited by time, has led me to the conclusion that what these two men said of the Papuan years ago is practically true to-day. Doubtless there were then, and are now, exceptions, but the people as a whole are still as their fathers were as regards true soul development. Common sense revolts against the idea that it could be otherwise. Undeveloped peoples adopt with comparative ease the outward forms of new faiths; the more ornate the ceremonial the more are their senses captivated by it, while music and song ever appeal to and charm them. But after all, these things are only practised by them along with, not to the exclusion of, primal superstitions, for an absolute change of religious thought must be a process of gradual evolution moving upwards, hand in hand with mental race development. For no man can put new wine into old bottles, nor new and higher beliefs into souls not fitted and strengthened by mental exercise for such food. That at least is what my study of the question has taught me. Possibly I have not learnt my lesson aright,—all I can say is that if I have misread the history of the ages I have not done so wilfully.

In another dispatch Sir William McGregor

states—"the lapse of time has steadily strengthened the conviction that mission labour is of immense value and importance in the possession." This is undoubtedly true, Drs. Lawes and Chalmers, Bishop Vergus, and Dr. Genocchi, the Revs. A. A. Maclaren and Copland-King, and the Rev. W. E. Bromilow have all done splendid work not only as the pioneers of their particular missions, but as citizens of Papua, and many others are following in a path far smoother to-day than when in 1870 the Rev. Dr. S. Macfarlane established a mission on Darnley Island preparatory to exploiting New Guinea.

I gladly acknowledge the work they have done and are doing in Papua. I do not believe they have made any real impression on the natives from the standpoint of an intelligent conception of what Christianity really is, and in some instances I fear in their laudable desire to win confidence and love they have encouraged a familiarity which, particularly in the case of savage peoples, tends to want of respect and to indolence. On the other hand, however, they have stood between the native and unscrupulous white men in the past. Their influence has ever been in the direction of morality and general cleanliness of life, and their homes have always been centres of hospitality for men of every creed and social status, while their wives have nursed many a fever-stricken wanderer back to health.

While Mrs. Pearse, a motherly, pleasant lady, was giving us tea, her husband told us of an adventure he had at Kerepuna, which called to mind Sydney Smith's well-known doggerel:—

“ I would I were a cassowary on the banks of the Timbuctoo,  
For then I'd eat a missionary, his prayers and his hymn  
books too.”

It seems that one day as he was strolling along the sand, an alligator came ashore and sprinted along the beach after him (and truly he would have made excellent eating), but Pearse put on such a spurt in getting away from the pearly gates, that he winded the alligator, and so is still in this veil of tears.

From where we sat we could see the thin trail of a narrow canal leading out to the coral reef through which at low tide a single canoe could pass to the fishing ground. Who cut this passage, or how it was excavated, or whether it was simply worn, is not known. ‘These people just use it, and trouble not at all about its history.

Their songs seem to tell the story of their past, but as they have forgotten what they mean, one is no further ahead—at present they can about get back to a great grandfather, which, after all, is a genealogical effort which would stagger many people claiming a far higher stage of development.

Just as we got on board again the canoes came back from the other shore bearing the workers home from the plantations. The Kerepunians are

a tall people for Papua, and some of the men standing spear in hand and with hibiscus in their hair looked veritable sons of war. There were also a goodly array of ladies *au naturel* to the waist. Taken all in all, the picture was full of local colour, and as they paddled for the shore where grew the rubber trees and yellow hibiscus it all became beautiful—softened and idealised by the distance.

So we left the two old missionaries to dream for a little while by the Coral Sea ere they sailed away for ever, and I wonder if, in the days to come, they will ever look from the windows of some quiet English home out over all the intervening space of sea and shore to palm-shaded, hibiscus-drowned Kerepuna—and holding each other's hands, just softly sigh.



## CHAPTER IV.

### SAMARAI AND WOODLARK. A BEAUTY SPOT AND A MINE.

We go Aground—A Cocoa-nut Plantation—Fife Bay—The Fairest Scene I ever knew—Samarai—From the Residency—Men who come to Samarai—The Lost Legion—A Walk through Samarai—Kwato—An Evening in a Missionary's Home—We Visit Milne Bay—Dobu—Woodlark.

OUT from Kerepuna we ran on to a sand bank opposite Cape Rodney, but backed off without hurt, and later passed between two reefs not a cable-length apart. In fact, navigating this coast close-in means feeling every inch of it, with a look-out in the "cage" in accord with whose warnings the ship is steered.

During the afternoon we anchored off a plantation the property of Whitten Brothers, of Samarai, and landing, walked under long avenues of palms to watch the husking of the nuts. Each native stood beside a stake with a sharp-pointed end, on which he drove the husk once or twice, thus creating a break which made it easy to tear it away from the shell. The nuts are then split open, drenched with salt water, and laid on tables when, after 48 hours' sunning, the copra is easily taken out of the broken shells, cut into small pieces, and bagged.

This plantation, like most others in Papua, had

been started with little method, but its present owners are trying to get it into good working order. Copra should be one of Papua's staple industries. The soil is equal, if not superior, to that of Herbertshohe, while the trees are not subject to attack from the hurricanes which prevail on most of the other islands, and the present price (£14 per ton) leaves a reasonable margin for waiting, cost of planting, and production.

In this connection, the following quotation from the Papuan Commission's report may prove of interest :—

*Copra.*—Cocoanut trees grow in many parts of Papua, but, judging from their observations and the evidence given, your Commissioners have little doubt that the eastern and western portions of the southern coast-line contain the pick of the copra-producing country. Asked how much copra was exported last year, the Treasurer replied, "Eight hundred and twenty-eight tons," and in answer to the question, "Do you think that industry is going to increase?" said, "I think so, more particularly as the value has gone up quite recently; it now fetches £14 per ton, while a few years ago it was only £7."

Mr. William Whitten also stated that he considered there was a good future ahead of this industry, and as a practical proof of his belief has lately purchased a cocoanut plantation between Port Moresby and Samarai.

Mr. Carpenter, manager for Burns, Philp and Co., in the course of his examination, gave the following evidence :— "There can be no doubt about cocoanut and rubber plantations going ahead. I was at Herbertshohe some years ago, and saw the land there, and I think the land is better here."

The most systematic attempt at cocoanut planting has been made on an island of the Conflict Group, distant about 70 miles from Samarai; on this island—which is named Panassesa—10,000 cocoanuts have been planted in pits about 3 feet deep, into which leaves and rubbish generally are swept. The ring barking and fire grubbing of the indigenous timber are done about the time of planting, and as this





MAKING COPRA, CLOUDY BAY.

timber falls it is heaped up clear of the lines to decay, and thus add manure as time goes on. Some of this begins to fall in the first year, and from thence on till it is all down: the loss of young cocoanut trees during this process is inappreciable.

When in full bearing it is estimated that an average of about 80 nuts per tree per annum will be obtained; a good yield might produce 100 nuts per tree. The 10,000 cocoanut trees referred to as producing an average of 80 nuts per tree are estimated to yield about 100 tons of copra per annum, in between seven and eight years; that is, assuming they will then be in full bearing. Many, however, will begin to bear at five years.

Your Commissioners can see no reason why numbers of such plantations should not be started and worked with profit and success on many parts of the mainland of Papua, and they wish particularly to point out a fact which must have an important bearing on the value of plantations as reliable assets, namely, that trees in Papua are not subject to the devastating hurricanes which prevail on most of the other islands.

After a night of pitching and rolling, during which Herbert was swamped in his cabin, we ran in and anchored in Fife Bay, a spot of real tropical beauty. Going ashore we met the London Missionary Society's Missionary, Mr. Rich, a young and vigorous fellow, evidently firm, and a good organiser, for the natives were all clean and bright, and their houses natty and well built. We had morning tea with Mrs. Rich, and her three winsome little children, who were whiter faced than I liked to see, but some day hill stations will go far to alter all that, and fortunately for the future of settlement they are possible of easy attainment on all this coast line. Mrs. Rich teaches the girls how to make most beautiful lace, and her husband, among many

practical acts, has faced the problem of curing the loathsome skin disease with the best results. He is also fighting the *anopheles* mosquito (the cause of malaria) by clearing the mangroves, and by draining.

The view from his house was superb. In front, three palm-crowned islands guarded the entrance to the bay, while steep ranges, clad in deepest verdure, stood sentinels behind. In the middle distance another island, stretching on the left a semi-circle of lower lands, palm-clad and radiant, and on the right bolder hills rolling fold on fold down to the foam-white beach. So fenced about by the ranges we stood and gazed over the islands and out to the Coral Sea.

Some day Fife Bay will take the place of Samarai as the official capital of this part of Papua, for its harbour possibilities are better, it is on the mainland, while immediately beyond the hills that rise from its shores lie rich lands that will yet support a big population both of white settlers and natives, if each are properly handled and encouraged.

Meanwhile, Mr. Rich and his wife are paving the way by teaching the people habits of cleanliness, industry, and discipline, and in proving what can be done in the way of banishing malaria.

That afternoon we passed between the mainland and a chain of islands. The richness of colour on either shore, the lights and shades, the suggestion



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SETTLER'S HOUSE, CLOUDY BAY.





of sensuous content, of nature triumphant over all the lures of the artificial, made up the fairest scene I have ever known out of a dream.

As evening fell we dropped anchor off Samarai—a mystic island, a toy domain, a scene from “Florodora,” all palms and crotons set in a crystal sea.

Samarai is one of the places that first made me hopeful for the future of Papua. A few years ago it was a death-trap. When we visited it—as the direct result of filling in a swamp, exterminating the mangroves, doing away with stagnant water, and attention to general sanitation—there was not an *anopheles* mosquito in it, and Dr. Jones, one of the men who is largely responsible for this changed condition of things, assured us that local malaria was practically a thing of the past. Eight years ago it was a white man’s grave, to-day, as tropical islands go, it is a sanatorium.

We were quartered in the Resident Magistrate’s house, an airy bungalow with wide verandahs built on practically the summit of the island. From this central vantage post we looked down on all the falling slopes covered with magnificent palms intermingled with bread-fruit trees, mangoes, just beginning to show their fruit, poncianas, like cedars of Lebanon in leaf, now crowned with glorious red flowers, crotons robed in deep tinted foliage, and lower still long avenues of cocoa-nuts circling the tennis and cricket grounds, while rows

of stately trees shaded the grass-carpeted flat, once a deadly swamp. Everywhere were coral-paved paths flanked with hedges of crotons, and winding along the shore ran a roadway roofed by spreading fronds. Circling it all were the straits, studded with tree-crowned isles, and ringed as with a jewelled girdle by mainland hills rising fold on fold, and high-peaked islands, twixt which came silver gleams of narrow waterways leading to the outer sea. I doubt if in all the world there be a more beautiful spot, for it is a cameo cut by immortal hands out of sea, and shore, and sky, and ever to me it will remain a very garden of the gods.

Commercially Samarai is to-day the most important town in Papua, set as she is fair in one of the waterways that lead from Australia to the East, and being by reason of her situation at the extremity of the mainland, a convenient centre of distribution for both coasts, and the islands of the South-eastern Division. She is, however, handicapped both from a commercial, and administrative point of view in possessing no harbour (the roadstead which does duty for one is of limited extent), and in having no frontage of good soil on the mainland; but her most serious disability lies in the fact that, being on an island of only fifty-nine acres there is no possibility of serious expansion. Still even if this were not so, the fact of being cut off from the mainland would



SAMARAI FROM THE RESIDENCY.



be fatal from the standpoint of settlement. If white men are to be induced to develop this part of Papua they must not be handicapped by being forced to carry their produce over ranges, and across the water to their seaport, or asked to undertake such a journey each time they want to visit a government department. By reason however of her position on the trade route, her possibilities as a sanatorium, her beauty, and her accessibility as a resort for tourists, and yachtsmen wishing to explore the lovely islands that lie in the surrounding seas, she must always hold her own, but it will not be as capital of the south-eastern littoral.

From an Australian point of view this commercial capital of the largest island in the World is a small township; but, judged from that standard, it more than holds its own, for it possesses three public-houses and one bishop. It also supports a soda-water factory, which must be accounted unto it for righteousness, and as a crushing answer to the inhabitant, who assured me that "this was too hard a country for soft drinks." Three stores, a church, a school, the Rectory, Government buildings, a few private residences, and a hospital about account for the other buildings, all of which are constructed of wood, and, if my memory serves me correctly, roofed with iron.

Here come diggers from the far Yodda and

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Gira fields, to pay off and sign-on "boys," some recruiting personally among the adjoining islands, others obtaining fresh hands from the professional recruiters, whose tiny schooners and luggers lie off in the roadstead, others again being supplied by Messrs. Whitten Brothers, their steamer bringing natives from the distant Fly River to work in the Northern Division. Good masters have little difficulty in getting labour, the same "boys" often signing-on for a fresh term. Bad ones the natives will have nothing to do with—if they know, and, while I believe that to-day most of the recruiters play fair, I am just as strongly of opinion that all do not, and so feel absolutely certain that the Government should take over all recruiting in the best interests of good employers, but more particularly to safeguard the natives, who, through ignorance of English, are placed at a terrible disadvantage if they fall into the hands of unscrupulous men. I realise, of course, that in the case of planters employing purely local labour this danger need not be feared, and consequently need not be so drastically guarded against.

Apart from recruiting, all miners from the north and Woodlark make this their port of departure for Australia. Some never get further south, beginning and ending their spree, and leaving their hard-won gold in one or all of the hotels, going back to risk and toil, so that six or twelve months later they may do the same thing

over again. Poor fellows ! they haven't even the satisfaction of the old western shepherd, who, after vainly striving for seventeen years to get beyond the first "pub," was at last carried past it dead, for their bodies even don't get past Samarai—they generally rot on the Mambare, or on some unknown track. Others reach Cooktown, a few Brisbane, a remnant spend what is left in Sydney, while here and there one of still sterner stuff may even see the Melbourne Cup. I speak, of course, only of that lost legion yearly, thank God, growing weaker for want of recruits. A big majority of the miners to-day are, I hope and believe, neither so weak nor so foolish as to work for months just for a few weeks of mad carousal, with sure delirium as the sum and substance of it all.

Here, too, come pearl buyers, traders of the baser sort, and certain Greeks fallen from their one-time high national estate, who barter for pearls and curios among the islands, and whose deportation from Papua would not make one good citizen the fewer.

One day after work we walked over part of this fairy island, past coral trees in scarlet bloom, glorious hibiscus blossoms, caladium leaves rich in wondrous shading and broad enough for elves to sit upon, and rare orchids. We passed by hedges of green and up pathways of crotons radiant with leaves of yellow, deep maroon, red,

and bright scarlet, and, walking among betel trees with slender stems and graceful fronds, paw paws, corkscrew palms, and grenadilla vines laden with great green fruit, we heard birds of rare plumage carolling from out each perfumed bower their love-songs, happy as when the world was young.

Another afternoon we strolled down past the sago palms, and were rowed over to Kwato, the headquarters of the Rev. M. Abel. He in no way suggested the type of missionary dear to my childhood and often still depicted in comic papers as sitting in an uncomfortably small, and—judging by the blazing hymn books—sufficiently hot pot, the while his congregation dressed in his top hat, shockingly cut frock coat and trousers, and huge boots, smilingly waited dinner. If such missionaries ever existed in Papua they have, I take it, been deservedly eaten. We, at any rate, did not meet one. The type we foregathered with in no way suggested overdone clericalism, they being in the main muscular and business-like looking Christians. Indeed, I was told that the Rev. Ramsay of Samarai had a particularly “dirty left,” while Mr. Abel looked well fitted to slog a ball or a head, did either merit punishment. He has played cricket for his county in days gone by, and has coached a team of his native boys who met a white eleven from Samarai the day we were at Kwato, and, alas for race prestige, beat them “out of their socks”! Some of their bowling and





CRICKET MATCH AT KWATO, WHITE RESIDENTS *v.* "BOYS."



fielding was excellent, while one fellow knocked up a century in quite Jessop-like form, but how he and the wicket-keeper stood up to fast "stuff" in their bare feet is one of the race problems I will leave alone.

That Mr. Abel has proved what natives can do in the way of carpentry and joinery, and other forms of skilled labour is amply shown in his saw mill and workshop, both of which, including the driving of the engine and the handling of the logs on the sawing benches, are entirely run by natives. They also make tables, chairs, and other furniture, turning legs splendidly, erect houses, and build their own boats. It may be objected that all this is an interference with white labour, but those who take this ground must remember that these natives are in their own country, not an alien race imported into it, and that consequently by every law of justice they should have first claim to their own labour-market, and that their only bar to employment should be their inability to perform skilled work satisfactorily. We are all agreed that the unskilled labour be left to them, and indeed that they alone can do it, but if men like Mr. Abel can lift certain of them out of the slough of being mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water" so much the better for them, and the better for us, and for Papua. There will always be a vast majority who will remain as they are, but if we stifle the upward inspirations of the few we shall inevitably

some day turn their thoughts inward to brood on the injustice of it, and they in turn will fan into discontent the many who are ignorant and easily led. We want our skilled labour for Australia. Papua will never be a white working-man's country, but if some decide otherwise and go when settlement has created openings, there will be room enough for both for years to come, only as a matter of common fairness there can be no line drawn as to colour, it must just be a case of the survival of the fittest.

I can further realise that workers in Australia would have just cause for complaint if they were flooded with the products of cheaply paid skilled Papuan labour, but in view of local conditions this is unthinkable, and under any circumstances easy of prevention.

I was told that Mr. Abel used picked boys, and that no fresh ones were coming on. Doubtless they were picked, probably it may be difficult to get others, for the Papuan is by choice an agriculturist. If this be so, the opponents of his experiment have all the less to fear, but be that as it may he is doing good and practical work, if only as an object lesson which may bear fruit in years to come.

Water is laid on to the mill and house, which is supplied with milk and butter from cows fed and kept on the island, and taking him all in all Mr. Abel was one of the smartest and most up-to-

date men I met in Papua, and one who at any rate believed in teaching the natives both healthy sport and practical work.

Leaving the cricket ground, which was once a swamp and a harbour for *anopheles*—now practically banished from Kwato—we were led by our host past well-kept milking sheds up a winding path to where the mission house, a spacious broad-verandahed bungalow, stood bathed in the warm glow of sunset.

First entering a big room like a hall open at the back, we saw lying on mats spread along either wall, and rolled in bright-coloured rugs, about twenty of the dearest little children, some asleep, some looking at us out of great soft dark eyes. Later their mothers would carry them off to their respective homes; meanwhile they worked and chatted near them. These are Mrs. Abel's special care, and she showed us excellent fancy-work and plain-sewing by the girls under her tuition. Her cousin helps her in all her labour, and we spent a most pleasant dinner-hour chatting to these two ladies about the possibilities and limitations of Papuan women. Then they gave us coffee, and let us smoke on the broad verandah with an outlook over the moonlit islands, while the natives sang part songs, and solos, to the accompaniment of the organ, and plaintively beautiful their voices sounded floating out among the palms and over the sleeping sea. Then we said "good-

bye," and Harris hastened our sleepy oarsmen by trolling out a boating song over the pulseless bay.

Thanks to the kindness of the Hon. W. Whitten, M.L.C., we had an opportunity to visit Milne Bay as his guests. Apart from ourselves, the party consisted of the three unofficial members of the newly appointed Legislative Council, Messrs. Whitten, Weekley, and Little, and Mr. Campbell, Resident Magistrate for the Division, a well-read officer full of native lore, and keenly interested in his work. The captain of our host's little steamer was, I found, a son of the late Commander Connor of our Naval Brigade, a very pleasant and interesting young fellow who had seen service in South Africa, and kicked over a lot of the world between times.

We ran out through the China Straits, the islands of Fergusson and Normanby rising like sea wraiths thirty miles ahead. After steaming forty miles we landed and walked in the shade of palms to Mr. Whitten's plantation, where grew cocoa-nuts, sago-palms, betel-nuts, pine-apples, a fruit of far Ceylon, grenadilla vines, rubber trees, taro, sweet-potatoes, and indeed most things that spring from the fruitful womb of the tropics, but it seemed to me that the owner leant somewhat heavily on Providence, for his fences, as obstructions, were an insult to the intelligence of the dullest pig, while his manager—doubtless a hard-

working and reliable sailor—held the most primitive views as to how to start a soil scarifier.

Before re-embarking, Mr. Campbell pointed out how absurdly and persistently close together the natives plant their cocoa-nuts, with the result that the struggle to get high enough to reach sunlight and wind resolves itself into a case of the survival of the fittest trees. It seems that a certain amount of moisture is necessary to bring the nuts to full maturity, and this nature provides in a very ingenious way by using the porous stem as a pipe and the head of the tree as a windmill, which by swaying the trunk to and fro pumps the water from the roots up to the fruit. If this be so, it is easy to realise how close planting must be fatal to all those trees that fail to reach the wind zone, and provides another instance of the inadequacy of primal methods in obtaining proper results. Individual Resident Magistrates are doing what they can to alter this state of affairs, but in the near future the Government must take in hand the whole question of the gradual improvement of the present native methods of agriculture.

Once on board we slowly steamed round the shores of the bay. It is a vast amphitheatre, sharp-peaked mountains scarred by great ravines, with here and there threads of water falling down their rugged sides, rising round it from cape to cape, while in between the central shore of the

bay and the hills lies a rich delta of tropical forest watered by winding streams. We rowed up one of these in the Resident Magistrate's boat. The banks were only about two feet above the water, and consisted of rich made soil covered with tropical foliage. A short pull brought us to a village extending for a couple of miles on each bank. As we approached, some of the women made a great show of sweeping up, for the Resident Magistrate is a man who sees that the village cleaning ordinance is no dead letter. But here there was little to cavil at, so we paddled on past houses well-made and clean, women rowing about in light canoes, and happy children playing in the water, here and there a tiny island, and everywhere lovely trees and splashes of scarlet hibiscus, and out beyond the mountains rising into white clouds and bluest sky. About 1,000 people dwell in this village of Naigara, named after the river on whose banks it stands; and that row up and back was just a voyage into a world where primal man and primal nature still dwelt, both as yet in great part protected from civilization's utilitarian hands. Still, the old order must change none the less, giving place to the new, but Government must see to it that the coming period of transition is marked by no acts of injustice, and that the dark memories of Milne Bay are never re-awakened.

In this fruitful region there is room enough for



white and brown alike to work out and mutually improve each other's destinies, if only the more highly developed race will realise that morality, industry, honesty, firmness, and patience are virtues that to be rightly claimed must be consistently practised in every-day intercourse with a people who can respect these attributes, and will eventually respond to them, and in certain instances possibly absorb them into their own lives.

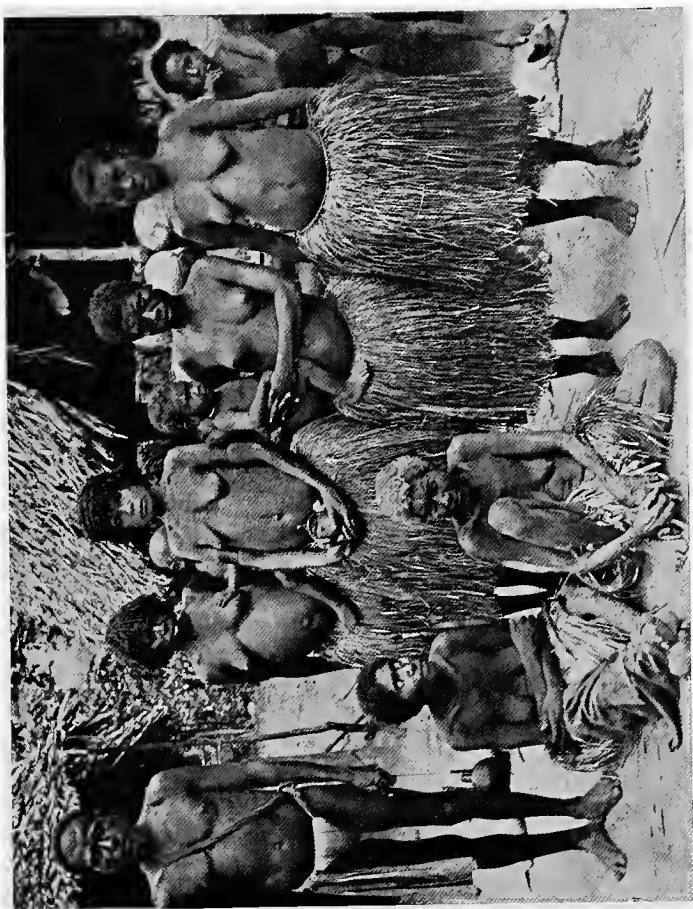
As we sailed back over a moon-lit sea, we listened to tales of Torres and Cook, and early Papua, well told. What gallant seamen one and all they were, steering their crazy sailing ships on unknown seas, and picking their unfamiliar way through a very labyrinth of reefs, where, now fortified with all the knowledge handed down from that fearless past, men tie their steamers up at night and creep with fearful steps by day. How stout old Moresby must have cursed when, after he had charted all this coast, they found in some forgotten drawer on the Continent charts as good as his drawn years earlier by some adventurous navigator.

Many ships have left their skeletons on these islands and coral patches, many men have died by the hand of treachery and revenge, but I think the most wholesale butchery was that of 300 Chinese wrecked in the St. Paul on Rossel Island on September 30th, 1858. The story goes that the natives placed all the Chinamen on a small

atol close by, supplied them liberally with food, and then, as their condition warranted it, rowed them over to the mainland and ate them. The survivors appear to have been under the impression that as they did not come back their mates were liberated, and so as each batch left they were given a Celestial God-speed in the shape of a song by those left behind. It is said that to this day the natives of Rossel Island include this Chinese ditty in their national collection; but, be all this as it may, the fact remains that in 1859 a French steamer took off one Chinaman, who was in the fulness of time arrested for "sly grog selling" on a Victorian "rush," and pardoned when he explained that he was the sole survivor of that Celestial holocaust.

Campbell told us of certain tribes where the women wield considerable power even to deciding for war or peace. It seems that if at the feast, held prior to a proposed foray, the women sang and danced, the men saw it through; but that if on the other hand the women sat silent and moody, the men still marched off to save their faces, but always on some pretence or other abandoned the expedition. In another tribe, if a woman took off her "rami" and threw it over the shoulders of any man about to be killed, he became at once "tabu" and no one dared to touch him. But Campbell's best story was of a sorcerer. It appears that this man was brought





NATIVES OF DOBU.

before him charged by the mother and father with having by means of sorcery induced an alligator to come out of the water and eat their child. "You have heard the charge," said Campbell, "is it true?" when to his surprise the accused replied with a superior smile, "Why of course it is, I'd be a pretty poor sorcerer if I couldn't do a little thing like that," and calmly went to gaol, having saved his reputation and made his position sure for all time, at the trifling cost of a few weeks' "hard."

On our return we found two bunches of flowers, radiant in beauty, subtle of perfume, sent by an old gentleman who loves them. Great yellow bells, purple, scarlet, and mauve blossoms nameless to me but very fair, great caladium leaves, and many another leaf I know no name for.

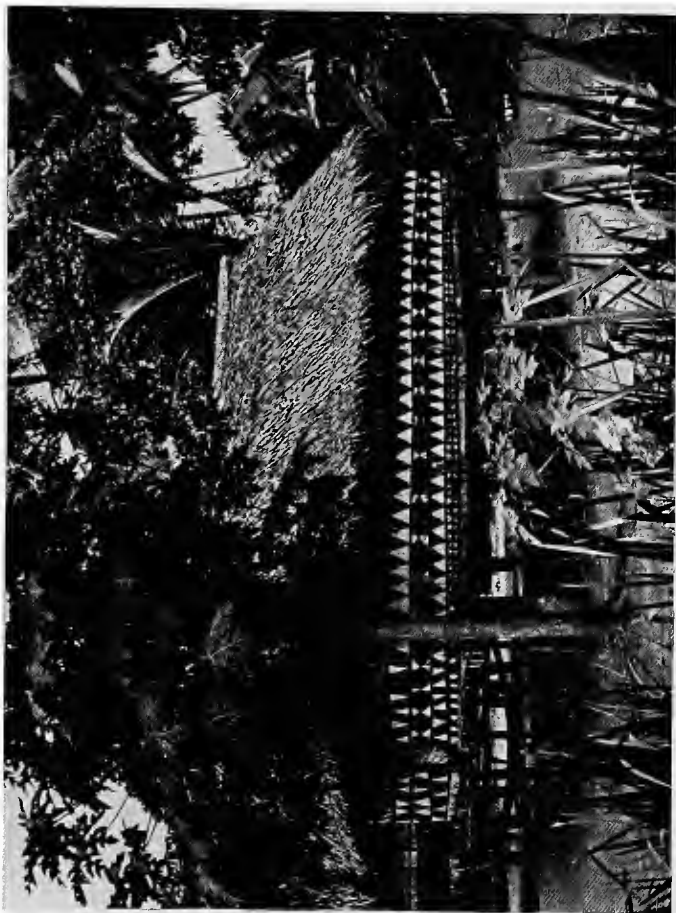
Our last visit was to the school where Miss Griffiths, not long from the Hunter River, is doing loving and useful practical work. As we got home the setting sun was painting as with gold the distant hills, and in the morning as we sailed away Samarai lying on a sea of glass and under a sky of blue seemed to be bidding us to come and rest awhile among its palms and flowers some other day.

We passed East Cape, the extreme end of the mainland, at eight o'clock, and always in sight of land entered Dawson Straits flanked by Normanby and Fergusson Islands, clouds rolling over their summits, and native gardens dotted about their

slopes. Before us rose a range of sun-lit, rugged hills. On our right lay Cape Dawson, a village perched on its forefront, and as we rounded its emerald buttresses and dark, vapour-capped summit, we saw the Island of Dobu guarding the entrance to the main passage—its scarred, keen-cut sides rising sheer to its table-topped crest.

Getting out our boat we rowed along the shore till we came to a spot where the air was charged with pungent fumes, and we could see bubbles rising up through water warm to the touch, the rocks below being coated with sulphurous corrosions. Not far away on Fergusson Island the sulphur rises out of natural tubes over about two acres, volumes of vapour shooting seventy to eighty feet in the air, and hot streams running down a ravine into a small lake whose waters are warm and impregnated with chemical matter. Some day the halt and the maimed, poor souls, and idle and over-fed, poor beasts, will find this spot, and make an enterprising hotel-keeper rich. Meanwhile it acts as a safety-valve for this region, which is all volcanic.

At Samarai, man has aided nature, and for a wonder showed a fine appreciation of the eternal fitness of things in the doing of it. Dobu, on the other hand, owes its wild, unstudied, unkempt beauty to the divine mother alone. It is an old Methodist mission station, but looked somewhat deserted at the time of our visit, an island teacher who either



PAINTED HOUSE, DOBU.





could not or would not speak English appearing to be in charge. A number of children, some in European dress and all clean, playing about the buildings, were evidently scholars, but we could gain little or no information owing to the absence of the missionary. The natives—who, I was told, once dominated all their neighbours—are to-day tame, listless and full of skin disease, while the villages we visited were dirty, and their inhabitants, from the oldest hag to the youngest child, persistent beggars.

Before leaving we lay off the island for a while, to all seeming in a lake, the hills on Fergusson shrouded in cloud, on Normanby, radiant in green, on one shore an extinct volcano ribbed with timber-clothed fissures, in the far horizon of the outward straits palms were growing as it were on the waves; and in our front Dobu, its cone cut into sharp ridges of green, each valley between full of the deeper shades of tropical foliage, its summit a dead crater rising out of a wealth of palms, mangoes, plantains, and gracious trees and glorious blooms. Around it all lapped the sea, here blue as sapphire, there so crystal clear that we could see the wondrous coral kingdoms where dwelt fishes of hues as brilliant as those of their fairy homes.

After a calm night we sighted some islands, and at eight Woodlark rose in our front, flat for the most part, with a mass of hills at one extremity.

Feeling our way through the reefs,—the passage was so narrow that one could throw a biscuit from the bridge into the shallows on either side—we entered the harbour and anchored about a mile off shore.

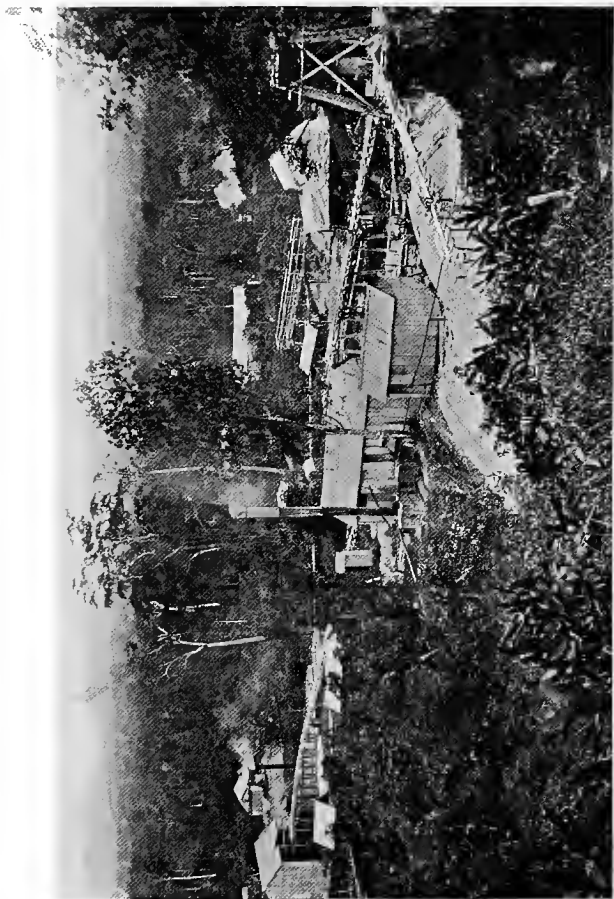
Landing below the Government buildings which stand on a rise just above the bay, we walked for one-and-a-half miles along a track cut through dense bush to the township. On each side the trees were nearly all covered with vines of varied shape and shade of leaf, for everywhere in the forests of tropical Papua the vegetable parasite plays the part of its human brother in civilised society, often like him never content till it has sucked the life out of some sturdy giant and wholly taken his place.

The mines, two in number, where fairly deep sinking has been done, adjoin and certain of the inhabitants declared that one had all the ground, the other all the gold. Personally, I express no opinion. I may be a pessimist, but somehow I always associate mines with “calls,” and philanthropic institutions, run by the public in the interests of managers, engineers, shift-bosses, and rank and file.

The working miners on Woodlark make from £5 to £6 a week, and they deserve it. I am not so clear as to what the bloated shareholders make—but they also deserve it.

There are other mines further out worked in a





THE MINES AT WOODLARK.

smaller way, and the Hon. F. Weekley, M.L.C., who is a practical digger and part owner of one of these, is very enthusiastic as to the possibilities that lie beneath a deposit of coral that is met with on his part of the island. He reckons it to be from forty to fifty feet through, and means to see the nether side of it. May he find a Mount Morgan big enough for himself and all the plucky fellows working on the field !

I do not know enough about mining to venture an opinion as to Woodlark's future, but some of the men who have fought fever and faced all the risks and privations of pioneer work there, are still confident and in daily expectation of a big find that will land thousands on its shores. The Government want to keep this possibility in view not only as regards Woodlark but other parts of Papua as well, for if it materialises and finds them unprepared, God help the diggers, for the authorities will not be able to do so.

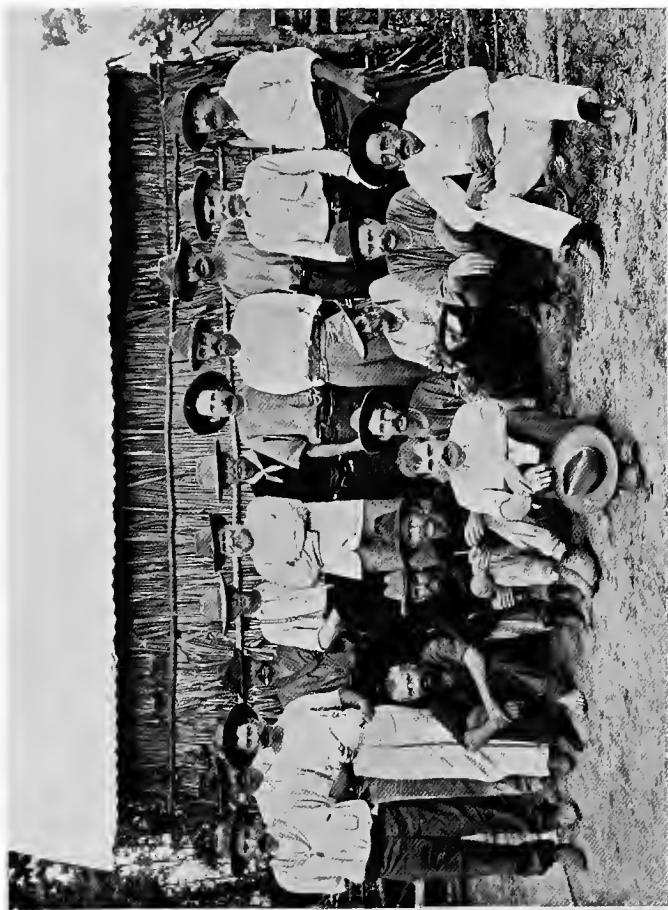
The township, consisting principally of a few miners' humpies, and two stores, each licensed to sell liquor, is not interesting, but the view from the one where we lunched was rather fine. The lunch, I regret to say, was not, nor were the washing arrangements, still I have faced worse in a licensed house on our own south coast.

The Commission opened in a room still redolent of fried tinned sausages, and now packed with miners. Right at the start one wildly drunken

son of toil began to express amiable but incoherent sentiments on things in general, and forcible ones as to a mate's eyes in particular, but on my explaining that he must stop or be put out, strong arms were in a moment about his neck, and he was dragged by his head into oblivion. Needless to say, there was no policeman nearer than Cooktown, so the carrying out of my threat rested between ourselves and the diggers, and they as usual rose to the occasion.

They have a hospital at Woodlark, and, what is better, a skilful, big-hearted, brave little matron who loves her work, and risks health and life without any lime-light effects, or martyr oratory, to cheer her unnoticed battle with disease. While showing us over her small, beautifully - kept wards, she told us she had been at "the Coast" under Matron McMaster for seven years (so her training had been of the best), and of how good and considerate the diggers all were to her. I should think they would be good to her, though I never knew a real digger bad to any woman.

There are places on the island I would have given much to explore, but time would not allow, so we rowed off to our ship as the sun was setting in a blaze of gold. As we neared her the light grew paler, and all the upper sky was veiled by feathery clouds, while near the sea-line tints of rose faded imperceptibly into flushes of colour, so delicate as to be impossible of name.



MINERS AT WOODLARK ISLAND.





## CHAPTER V.

### AN ISLAND SEA.

Among the Islands—A Relic of the Past—Kiriwiria—Real Chiefs—On Spirits Generally—The Local Story of the Creation—The Mission—The Destroying Spirit Hovering over Papua—A Native Dance—A Picturesque Anchorage—Pigeon Island—A Worried V.C.—The Patron Snake—Moresby Passage—Bwaidoga—The Methodist Resolve—Bartle Bay—Some Native Beliefs—Native Irrigation Schemes—Dogura—Noble Women—Evensong—One who has borne the Heat and Burden of the Day.

LEAVING Woodlark, we steamed into an island sea. On our right five of the Marshall Bennett Group rose wooded, flat-topped, and all with contours so alike that they looked as if turned out of one mould. On our left lay the Egum Group, a large number of small islands. Before reaching these we sighted three canoes all out of sight of land. They were built of planks of wood caulked with gum, and carried large outriggers and a single sail. They are splendid sea boats, can sail right close into the wind, and are about the fastest and safest craft afloat. At nightfall we anchored off one of the Trobriand Group, a wooded isle with stone ridges rising out of a mass of foliage that fringes its pumice-strewn shore line. Most of the villages were built on the top of the ridge, one on the shore being small and squalid, its thatched huts low, and not on poles. Here several of the natives were smeared in black in token of mourning.

George bought me an interesting curio from one of them, a short, straight-bladed weapon with brass haft and cross hilt, in shape and length not unlike a Roman Legionary's sword. Its owner could only trace it back to his grandfather; but, as these natives use the word "couteau," I suspect it was a relic either of the old Jesuit mission on Woodlark, or of those daring French navigators who sailed these waters long ago. The blade was too well tempered for "trade," and, though now black with yam juice and dulled by splitting palms, may once have been discoloured by nobler stuff, when gallant wheezens were slit in homeric struggles on blood-dyed decks.

Here we floated at anchor over thirty feet of water of rarest blue, and yet so clear that we could see the coral on the bottom—a wondrous world of colour—and then, when the sun went down, great waves of rose and green and blue radiated upwards across the sky.

Kiriwiria is the most important island of the Trobriand group, is long, low, and covered with rich masses of foliage, and is a fruitful land where yams grow to twelve feet in length, the native sheds being packed with them. Here fish is also abundant, the natives catching them by diving down to the reef and crushing on it a sort of fibre which exudes a poison, killing the fish, but without rendering them harmful to man as food. The

people do a certain trade in pearls, but these are not of the first quality. They also show considerable skill in carving wooden lime spoons. On this island are two or three fine banyan trees, one in front of the Government Station covering, I should say, half an acre.

The inhabitants were, unlike the natives so far seen, most industrious, while their chiefs, who exact tribute, possessed a certain amount of real authority, in striking contrast to the comic opera ones in the rest of known Papua. We were told that their power generally consisted in the fact that they were also sorcerers, or if not, had a sorcerer who acted for them. But while this combination of Church and State goes to show that they have either learnt from history, or intuitively hit upon the surest method of keeping their people in their proper place, *i.e.*, under their feet, it fails to account for a good deal, for sorcerers are plentiful and feared all over Papua, and ready, I take it, to help other chiefs, yet only on the Trobriands did we find any actual tribal fealty worthy of the name.

These islanders have a different method for dodging spirits to the Kerepunians, for unlike them they put no trust in poles, but build their huts with roofs touching the ground to prevent spirits getting under them and so into their houses. I regret to say, however, that they have failed, if indeed they ever attempted, to prevent

the spirits of "Brummagen" from entering into themselves, for even as we walked by the village we saw them in feverish haste "fakeing" up lime spoons and native weapons for our special benefit. Spirit of commercial dishonesty, where may men hide from thee, where truthfully declare that thou art not? Thou hast dishonoured Japan, fouled Africa, poisoned the very heart of India, battered on our soldiers from Sebastopol to Pretoria, and lo, I found thee once again on a lonely island of the Pacific brazenly proffering me, as a genuine old betel-nut discoloured lime spoon, a piece of dyed stick, the knife-marks still fresh upon its ill-carved handle!

These people have an interesting, if local, legend of the Creation. According to their belief the island was first covered with scrub but uninhabited by man. Then a great lizard came and scratched a hole in the earth. Then a dog came and made the hole deeper, then a pig which made it deeper still; and out of this rose five beautiful maidens who founded five villages. When asked how they, being all women, had offspring, the answer was that the maidens laid themselves on the ground and rain fell upon them and so the race had a beginning. Remembering how after rain the earth brings forth all vegetable life, it is easy to understand the reasoning which would suggest to primitive man such an answer as explaining the beginning of life away back in the womb of time,





SAMOAN MISSION TEACHERS, KIRIWIRIA.

but the strange thing is that until a short while ago these people did not in any way connect birth with sexuality.

At the Methodist Mission House and Church which stand on a picturesque spot between the village and the Government Station, we saw several island teachers of both sexes. Most of the men were fine handsome fellows, while one Fijian girl was distinctly graceful and pretty, all being bright and most anxious to do what they could for us, but, alas! practical ignorance of each other's language proved a severe handicap to gleaning information, and unfortunately the missionary in charge was absent at the annual conference. We, however, saw a lot of clean, bright school children, but from my point of view some were overdressed. A rami is graceful, sufficient, and is, I feel sure, the healthiest costume for the native girls of Papua.

The Assistant Resident Magistrate, Mr. Bellamy, lives in a picturesque, if creaky, native house, and with him we found the Hon. M. Morton, one of the veteran officials of the territory, and his chief. Both were good advertisements for the climate, particularly the younger man, who was as well set up and pink as a new chum just landed. Bellamy (who has trained medical knowledge) is doing a great work on the Trobriands, just as Dr. Jones is at the lock hospital near Samarai; indeed I bracket these two as among the most practically

useful men in Papua to-day, and as the natives' best friends and only possible saviours. For both are fighting a skilled but doubtful battle against a loathsome disease, and if they fail the Papuan is doomed, and possibly the white man, too; for if once the disease spreads on the mainland and attacks with decimating force, the black man may, urged on by the sorcerers, conceive the idea that it is a device of the white man to destroy him, and so, blind with unthinking rage, may rise in general and red revolt. To my mind, from no other cause is a serious rising, at this stage of Papuan history, within the realms of practical possibilities, unless, of course, as the result of criminal official weakness or blundering, and I also admit that the picture I have drawn is not probable of actual fulfilment but, while saying this, I still insist that it is possible, and so feeling strongly I have written strongly in the hope that the Commonwealth Government will not forget this festering plague spot, but rather will continue to fight it with no petty regard for the cost, and with untiring and ceaseless vigilance.

Mr. Bellamy, young and enthusiastic, thinks it can be stamped out. Dr. Jones, viewing it from the standpoint of a wider experience, hopes at best to hold it in check, but fails to see how even this can be done if it gets a hold among the wild and, as regards this disease, hopelessly ignorant tribes of the interior of Papua. Government, alike



in the interests of humanity and safety, must see to it that he is backed up in every way in his efforts to prevent so awful a possibility.

When on this island we witnessed a native dance named "bucoucuna," the performers being all men dressed in women's ramis with white feathers in their hair, and long plumes of cassowary tails tipped with red parrots' down, sticking out from their bustles. Men with drums standing in the centre were chanting and beating time as the dancers circled round them. Then reluctantly we left Bellamy and his hospitable bungalow; and as the ship lay four miles off the landing jetty, sailed back over the coral reef in the face of a sunset of purest gold.

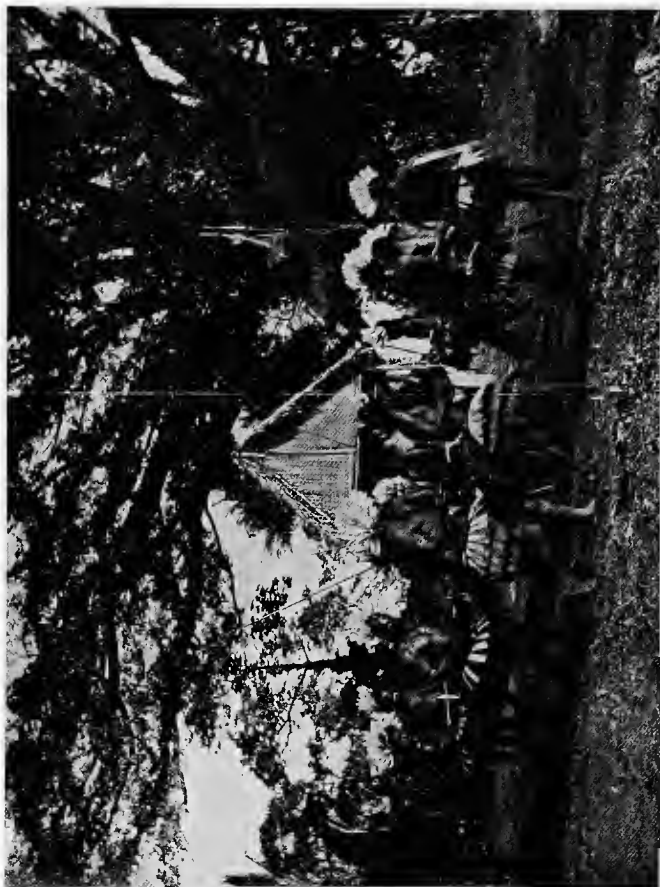
Once more under way, we passed through islands often but a few yards square, green with undergrowth and sand-ringed, and lonely atolls bare of all vestige of shade. Then, in our front, the Amplet Group rose cone-shaped out of the sea. About mid-day we ran between two islands, partly wooded, but with great patches of grass on their sides and summits. On one a village by the shore, on the other, one built upon a spur halfway to its crown. They looked like two great emeralds set in aqua marine, while everywhere lay other islands all beautiful, and in the far distance the clouds rolled over the peaks on Fergusson.

We anchored at the base of a mountain, its lower slopes green velvet, its higher altitudes

forest, with mists rising out of deep-cut ravines, its bare and rock-faced head shooting above the circling clouds to a height of 4,500 feet. All round was stretched a chain of rugged volcanic peaks split by narrow passages, so we lay as it were in a lake whose shores were fringed by rich masses of timber right to the water's edge.

Landing, some of the ship's people went bird shooting, which recalls to mind that earlier in the day we passed a small island, in reality little more than a pillar of rock with tufts of heather growing out of its fissures, which was covered with hundreds of pigeons. We visited a village on the beach, a somewhat squalid spot, the people looking wretchedly thin and half starved, though I was told the sea at their feet was teeming with fish. Assuming this to be true, these people want saving from themselves rather badly.

As nearly as we could gather from the village constable, who was full of excitement and provokingly empty of English, the people inland had lately killed and eaten a local boy, and had further threatened to repeat the act, which seemed to me to prove either that we misunderstood the story or that they were no judges of flesh foods. I am not clear as to what we were expected to do, but imagine it was either to bring the murderers to justice, or to kill and possibly help eat any stray bushmen we chanced to come across, just to



A NATIVE DANCE AT KIRIWIRIA.



average matters. Anyway, we had to decline on the score of want of time, to say nothing of absence of official status.

According to native belief there dwells in the mountain which towers above the village, a great snake possessing power to make or mar their crops. I fancy he has too much regard for his stomach to interfere with them personally.

We left Kilkeran at sunrise, its peak shooting up out of a sea of mist, and coasted along the shores of Fergusson. As we passed through the narrow Moresby Passage wonderful effects came and went. On one shore rose a mountain its sides in shadow, its crown partly in glorious light, in part full of gloom. On our other bow Goodenough or Morata rose, all its billowy slopes and bands of foliage reflecting every shade of emerald, and all its peaks shrouded in fleecy cloud. Beneath us was the water full of changing hues; on high the sky pale blue beyond the mountain tops and richly deep as rare cut sapphires above the lower cloud banks. Ahead were a conical peak and long ranges of mist-shrouded hills, behind lay the open sea. White-winged birds floated about our vessel, and inshore crept a schooner, her sails showing clear against a green-carpeted hill.

We anchored off the Mission Station and got out our boat just as the missionary and his bride of yesterday sailed in, and so together we landed, our party joining with the natives in welcoming

Mrs. Ballentine to her new home. It was a picturesque and in a way a pathetic episode of missionary life. The marriage had taken place on the previous afternoon at the new Methodist Headquarters, immediately on the close of the annual conference, and they had sailed away the same evening in an open boat manned by natives, being at sea all night but reaching Bwaidoga as we hove to. So these young people began two voyages at one and the same time, one of which we saw safely accomplished, and I pray that the other, which I hope will be vastly longer and I know will be far more full of incident, will also end in some sure anchorage protected alike from life's reefs and hurricanes. We all admired the way the bride rose to the occasion. Picture the situation, no other white woman, and the brown ones strange and from a "maid" standpoint hopeless; home a batchelor one, husband anxious to help, but a man; no idea where anything was, never having seen the place before, and four utter strangers to entertain at her first four o'clock, and yet she accomplished the feat without fuss or outward worry and was most kind and nice in the doing of it.

I found Mr. Ballentine, the first Methodist so far met, a practical, earnest young fellow who had seen service in South Africa. He told me the late conference had unanimously decided to teach English at all their stations, and while I am not

clear as to how this is to be effectively done where island teachers are in charge, I still feel a deep respect and an earnest desire for the ultimate success of men who came to this decision "because they felt it was their duty to teach English to British subjects." It will be well for the Papuan when all men hold similar views as to the duty they owe alike to him and the Empire to which all—both white and brown—belong.

After a slight roll and a fine view of a tropical storm on the hills, we anchored off the Anglican Station at Bartle Bay. Landing on a shore dotted with palms and shady trees we were met and taken up a well-made winding road to the comfortable mission house, which stands on a small plateau with a wonderful background of peaks and volcanic formations, indescribably picturesque in colouring, and remarkable alike in the grandeur and delicacy of their contours.

The natives believe that in two of these mountains dwell spirits, nor do I wonder, for they seemed to me too stately as abodes for puny mortals. They also assert that somewhere amid their solitudes an old woman stands changed to stone, which is interesting by reason of its likeness to the Biblical story of Lot's wife.

Close by are three purely native irrigation schemes. In one a tunnel has been cut through the base of a cliff; in all they dam the natural stream and so flood a main channel from which

branch lesser tributaries, each man having an allotted time during which he may drain the water from these into his own ground. I know of no other place in Papua, save on the Fly, where methodical irrigation is carried out by the natives.

Dogura shows evidence of care and systematic management both in its buildings and grounds, and it was a pleasant picture and hopeful future sign to see a fine herd of cattle feeding on the grassy slopes. I understand they number between eighty and ninety, that milk is abundant, and that at Hioge they have a team of bullocks doing good work. This mission has planted a considerable number of cocoa-palms, and grows large quantities of native food at its various stations.

We had tea in a cool basement room with four ladies of the mission, the Rev. Copland King, and a young student not long from Victoria, who was very keen but as yet somewhat worried by the native languages. Two of the four ladies had been on the Mambare doing medical nursing, all alone, in one of the dreariest and most deadly spots in Papua. Such gentle, patient, heroic women are alike the salt and sweet savour of the earth. Another was in charge of the school, and indeed I feel certain that all were walking with singleness of heart and purpose what they held to be the path of duty.

Later we attended evensong, and heard the boys sing in their own language, Mr. King con-



ducting the service in Papuan with a fluency I wish he could induce his congregation to emulate from an English standpoint.

He is an Australian, being a member of an old and well-known New South Wales family, and came to this coast when a missionary's work was full of risk and hardship, and in a quiet, unostentatious way has been leading a life of practical usefulness ever since. He believes in white settlement, and I feel will do all in his power to help it on, for being in no sense hide-bound by old Crown Colony traditions or prejudices, he realises that a settled white population is more likely to do the natives good than harm.

This mission is ruled over by a Bishop, who was absent from Papua during our visit, but who, I understand, has given practical proof of his love for the work by spending most, if not all, his private fortune on his diocese.

As the moon came up, Mr. King and his comrade saw us to the shore, and then we sailed out into the night and away from this most lovely and hospitable spot.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CAPE NELSON TO TAMATA—A BRAVE MAN AND A WONDERFUL MARCH.

Cape Nelson—"Victory"—The One Climb Left—The Fiords—A Practical A.R.M.—The Amphibians—Blood Money—Justice, Swift and Stern—The Power of a Fearless Heart—Buna Bay—Ora Bay—Mambare Beach—Tamata—Childish Sport—The Story of Corporal Sedu—The Rout—Two Lessons—Bushimi and Oya—Bushimi's March from Sea to Sea.

WE arrived off Cape Nelson in the midst of a shower which utterly spoilt the view from the sea, but in the afternoon our disappointment was all forgotten. For we rowed up a marvellous arm of the sea, fenced on each shore by sheer cliffs and steep-faced ranges, all clothed and crowned with palms and mangoes and giant vines, while ever ahead rose in splendid confusion a very tumult of hills, broken and torn and tumbled before the feet of Britannia, Temaraire, and Trafalgar, while Victory's crater, whence smoke for ever rises, towered in their rear.

When last in active eruption, a stream of boiling water and lava rose out of one of its craters and poured down its side into the sea, sweeping away to ruin and death the villages nestling on its slopes, and leaving as a sign and mark of vengeance a great rift cut through the forest and into the earth itself. Victory is about the only mountain of



THE "MERRIE ENGLAND," CAPE NELSON.



importance still unclimbed in British Papua. In the past at least one attempt has been made but failed, and when we were there the Resident Magistrate, Mr. Manning, meditated a try, but he has since departed, so the field is still open for any adventurous soul with a leaning towards cremation.

This delta is pierced by over thirty fiords, all radiating outwards from the mountains like the ribs of an open fan, and all beautiful as the one we rowed up on that still, sensuous afternoon.

The station is picturesquely situated on a bluff near the mouth of one of the fiords, and we looked down almost sheer on to the masts of the *Merrie England* as she lay at anchor below. Mr. Manning and his Assistant Resident Magistrate, Mr. Higginson, made us very comfortable. The latter, by the way, appears to have profited by his Queensland bush training, for his chief told me he had built the gaol and was the handy man of the station. Young Australians of this type are the men to send to Papua where an ounce of practical experience of how to make the best of things is worth a ton of theory.

Mr. Manning showed us some interesting photographs of a tribe, erroneously said to be "web-footed," who live in some marshes on the north-east coast. The pictures we saw were of ugly, thin, misshapen creatures, their legs, through constant kneeling in canoes, being abnormally

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developed in certain directions, their feet splay, but not webbed. Apparently driven into the marshes in the past, they build their houses on poles above the water, fattening the pigs in nets hung under them, and using light canoes that can skim over or through the flags and reeds. At one time they used to procure wives by capturing women, probably by cunning, from the mainland, but when Captain Barton and Mr. Manning visited them, this means of perpetuation was evidently a thing of the past, for only seven or eight of these miserable amphibians remained.

While we were at Cape Nelson some natives came in, bringing with them a half-starved poor devil of a boy who had run away from a digger on the Mambare and was attempting to make for his home. Having handed him over, they were given some blood money in the shape of tobacco and went away happy.

Possibly experience has proved that this is alike the right, only, and most merciful method of stopping desertions, and saving these escapees from starvation and murder among strange and savage tribes, but frankly I do not like it, not because the criminal is given up—for that is properly insisted upon wherever laws obtain—but by reason of the payment for, or bribery to do, an act which can only be justified on the ground that it is performed not for gain but in the public interest. To my mind it is offering a premium

for treachery to undeveloped minds unworthy of our best traditions, and calculated to sap all true sense of race loyalty in the people we have accepted the responsibility of guiding and governing.

Soon after leaving Cape Nelson we passed the mouth of a river where Sir William McGregor meted out blood-red justice to a tribe before warned, and yet caught in the very act of cooking and eating human flesh. For, avowed champion though he was of native rights, he yet never hesitated to take life if, in his opinion, it was the only way to prevent inter-tribal cruelty and slaughter.

I was told a story of McGregor's African rule which, even if not true, is at least typical of the man. He had experienced considerable trouble with an inland and rebellious chief, and at last decided to settle with him personally, so started his march through the forest in search of him. Full of vigour, he soon left his escort far behind, and at last, striding on in deep abstraction, tore some vines out of his path to find himself in the entrance of a clearing and face to face with the chief, who sat on a rude dais, a double row of warriors, clubs in hand, lining the path from where McGregor stood to where the rebel insolently waited. Like a flash he realised that he was alone, and then, without a moment's hesitation, strode on past all those scowling faces, and seizing

the astonished chieftain by the throat, hurled him to the ground, and mounting the throne, sat upon it. Twenty minutes later his escort found him still sitting there with folded arms and steady eyes—the warriors held by his imperious gaze, their chieftain grovelling at his feet.

For a time we saw the smoke rising into the clear morning air above “Victory’s” bare and scarred summit, but afterwards the beauty seemed to fade out of sea and shore.

The Port of the Northern Division and sea terminus of the Yodda and Kokoda road is a wretched hole, low lying, and surrounded by mangrove and other *anopheles* breeding swamps. A few days before our arrival they had an earthquake and tidal wave. Had the latter meant business we would have looked in vain for either Government or private stores, as all three are practically level with the water. In addition to these land disadvantages, the approach from the sea is very bad, and the anchorage itself almost an open roadstead.

In view of the splendid land for sugar-cane and for all-round tropical agriculture, and the timber and mineral possibilities of this division, it can be only a question of a short time till Ora Bay is made the port.

Unlike the present disease centre, Ora Bay, which is only thirty miles distant, could be made a fairly healthy settlement, being surrounded by







ARMED NATIVE CONSTABULARY, SAMARAI. [85

high ground and possessing fresh water. As a harbour it is also far superior, being much better protected from the prevailing winds. A short deviation would connect it with the main Yodda road, and if the Government is really anxious to save the health and lives of its white settlers they will make the change without delay, for a great percentage of the malaria which develops inland is contracted in the narrow *anopheles* belt that surrounds Buna Bay. Town there is none, and I doubt if I am even justified in dubbing township, a Government depôt and a private store set side by side, and a third one half-a-mile further round the bay.

To reach Mambare Beach we sailed along a prettily-wooded coast with the main range in full view, the great peaks of "Victoria" and "Albert Edward" (the twin giants of Papua) rising in bold relief, and in the dim distance "The Gap" which two of us would soon have to climb. Passing "Mitre Rock" we saw the German frontier and dropped anchor opposite the low-lying mouth of the Mambare River, that stream of dead hopes and live mosquitoes.

The day we lay there it was all so silent and lifeless that it took an effort to conjure up that other day of terror in '96 when diggers and their "boys," flying from black revolt, left Tamata in flames and their comrades weltering in blood and unavenged, and, drifting out to sea on rafts, found

safety on German ground. They showed us the tree where one poor wretch, not so fortunate, sought cover, only to be given up as a plaything to the children, who stoned him until he fell to earth—and death.

Two episodes stand out in strong relief against a dark background of treachery in this Tamata massacre. The surprising trust in “moral suasion” displayed by the gallant and experienced Mr. Green, a trust which was apparently not shaken even by the warnings of his own men, and the heroic death of Corporal Sedu, who, when he might have escaped, elected to return unarmed and die with a leader who taunted him with being a coward.

This is shortly the story as I heard it. The tribes about Tamata showing signs of unrest, Mr. Green, a man noted for his successful handling of natives, was sent there. In pursuance of his theory that trust begets trust, he ordered his men to work unarmed. Very soon they heard enough to make them realise the danger this course involved, and at last, one morning, Corporal Sedu told Green of their fears and begged him to let them carry their carbines. Green refused to believe there was treachery, and on Sedu insisting, called out, “All who are not cowards pile arms.” All, including Sedu, obeyed. Once in the bush, Green sent Sedu on some message, and while he was away the attack began which could only have

one ending. Still, though well knowing this, and indeed while probably still smarting under his leader's contemptuous disregard of his warning, Sedu, on hearing the cries of battle, deliberately ran back, and, unarmed, was killed at his master's side, being like a true soldier "faithful unto death."

With the death of Green and his police, forty white men, armed, but without discipline or a leader to rally round, became a panic-stricken rabble. Tamata was destroyed, and a demoralized remnant drifted down the river and out to sea, while for a season red revolt reigned supreme.

To my mind the death of Sedu and his comrades, and the magnificent discipline displayed by them in the face of what they knew to be certain annihilation, tells us with no uncertain voice what splendid material for soldiers we have in Papua if led by men they respect and love. The failure on the other hand of an undisciplined mob of white men, armed but leaderless, to hold their own, should be a lesson and an answer to those who, relying solely on race prestige, too often to-day neglect all ordinary precautions, and so make possible another Tamata. For, under similar conditions, what happened once may happen again, and to-day in parts of Papua conditions are little different from those on the Mambare in 1896.

Papua is in truth a land which is a law unto itself in many ways, for as we sat talking of

Tamata, the old chief, Bushimi by name, who planned and led the massacre, came on board, accompanied by his son Oya. They were physically both splendid men—Bushimi, now full of years and respectability, being a retired policeman, his mantle having fallen on Oya who later was on our escort, and I often wondered if he was one of the bright little children who stoned the fugitive out of the tree on Mambare beach.

Bushimi had some stirring times after Tamata, and before he joined the “foorce,” was captured and sent with three others to Port Moresby gaol on the other side of Papua. From there he and they managed to escape, and attempted the apparently impossible feat of walking across an unknown country, through hostile tribes, speaking languages different from their own, and over a perfect maze of mountains, including the main Owen Stanley range. But impossible was a word without meaning to the stout-hearted old Bushimi, so he did it, arriving home alone. History is silent as to the fate of his mates. Ill-natured people say he brought all of them back with him save their bones, but this I do not believe, although I admit that to keep the commissariat going must at times have strained even the ingenuity of a Bushimi.

## CHAPTER VII.

### FROM SEA TO SEA—BUNA BAY TO THE DIVIDE.

Getting Ready—We divide Forces—We begin our March from Sea to Sea—We enter the Forest—The Fever Belts—On the Bank of the Girinri—Some of our Fellow Travellers—Primal Papua—Kandarita—A Village Crone—Children of Nature and the Sun—The First Fruit of the Land—Half Devil, Half Child—We Reach the Yodda Road Again—Statues in Bronze—Some Types—Grass Patches—An Hereditary Office—Native Gardens—Log Bridges—A Papuan Moses—A Dainty Maid—A Native Climber—Running Amok—We Reach the Kumusi—A Grim Tragedy—An Epicure's Opinion—From the Rest House—A.N.C. Dandies—A Native Market—We Cross the Kumusi—Suspension Bridges—Natural Engineers—A Sorcerer—A Faith that should Move Mountains—Fairly Strong in the 'Seventies—The Divide—"Purple Patches."

ARRIVING back at Buna Bay Mr. Monckton had a busy time on shore with the carriers, while George essayed the delicate task of getting his own way as to the clothes we were to carry. I still feel certain he broke faith with me on the trousers question.

Parting with Okeden was the one big fly in our ointment, not only for loss of his comradeship but because we both knew how keen he was to come. Still one of us had to sacrifice inclination to duty, and so ever generous he turned his back on a long cherished hope and wished us both God-speed.

Being left behind was also a knock-down blow to poor Harris, but in his case I dared not risk the extra danger of fever that the trip entailed, for being not only Secretary, but taker and transcriber of evidence as well, his breakdown would have

dislocated all our work, but he too put his disappointment behind him—like the loyal fellow he was—and handed over his camera to Herbert gladly, and yet I fancy with fear and trembling.

On the morning of October 15th we saw long lines of black figures (every second one carrying a pole) marching along the beach to the Government Depôt, and at eight o'clock we went over the side and were rowed ashore, armed with revolvers and water bottles, Herbert sporting, to my exceeding envy, a pair of English shooting boots he had purchased from Manning, while I wilted in Australian bluchers at 11s. 9d., further brought into ill-shapen relief by service putties. The Hon. William Little, M.L.C., chose as his travelling costume a pair of delicately-toned pyjama pants stuck into pale blue socks with white toes and facings at 1s. 8d., bluchers tied with severely simple twine, and dark blue shirt cut low at the neck, with regulation evening sleeves, and a felt hat of a colour known to connoisseurs as rusty brown. Being an old hand, he didn't worry about a water bottle, and carried his revolver wrapped up with his blanket on some native's back. George ran to moles, bluchers, a twill shirt, and a battered topi, the butt of a revolver, presented to him by Sir William, showing—early buccaneer style—above his belt; while Mr. Monckton, Resident Magistrate for the Northern Division and commander of our escort and carriers, was spic and span and



business-like, from his well-rolled putties to his oiled and flexible revolver cross-belts.

Marshalling his squad of twelve armed native constabulary and 130 carriers, who either bore their loads singly in bags held on their backs by shoulder straps, or swung midway on a pole resting on the shoulders of two, he set his column in motion, while out in the bay the *Merrie England* gathered way. Then, as she whistled farewell, we turned our backs, but not our hearts, on our good friends, and plunged into the forest.

Passing through a village we tramped along a narrow track which would have been a quagmire in bad weather, through tropical forest broken by open patches of high, coarse grass, Monckton forcing the pace to get us through the *anopheles* belt, and eight miles out crossed a broad but shallow river, and camped in at least comparative safety, as malarial mosquitoes were not so numerous from here on.

Herbert had a slight visitation of Barcoo as we came along, but apparently vanquished an old enemy effectually, as he was neither sick nor sorry from then out, while George spent the evening livening up our boys and wrestling with old fever germs. As a personal servant the Papuan has distinct limitations.

We found the tramp trying, being out of form, and came in soaked with perspiration. Still, the experience was all fresh and full of interest.

Round our camp the forest rose, and from it came the familiar cry of cockatoos and the unknown songs of other birds.

We had a fly each and a taut canvas hammock covered with a suffocating cheese-cloth net, ordinary ones being useless to counter the onslaught of a Papuan mosquito; but the rest of our camp was picturesque, the carriers having in an incredibly short space of time transformed the road into a street of palm-thatched "lean-to's," where, on platforms raised two or three feet above the ground, they sat and ate and made merry, and slept huddled together, the clean utterly indifferent to the presence of those scaled with skin disease. Under this platform they often built a small fire, and in the high altitudes I have seen them packed round it as well as on the stage above. Camp seems for them to be a continual feast, for often in the night if they wake, a fresh attack is made on anything handy. In their quick erection of shelters they are greatly aided by the soft and easily-split timber and the broad leaves which grow ready to hand for roofing.

In our party were nine men in chains, about to be tried for eating a mail boy. I was told they would get about a year apiece, not an excessive price to pay it struck me, particularly if they were epicures.

Our carriers were of the Berindiri race and men



WARRIORS AT KANDARITA.



of splendid physique, probably because until a few years ago they always killed weak and deformed male children ; strange to say they let all the girls live, holding that weak women might still bear strong sons.

After a wet night, day came in fine, and striking camp at 7.15 we almost at once left the main track and plunged into primal Papua.

Following native paths, we clambered over a rude fence to find ourselves in the largest garden we had yet seen. Here amidst a perfect riot of vegetation grew plantains, taro, sugar-cane, and other edible fruits and roots. Then on we tramped, the great trees making so thick a canopy that even the tropical sun could not find us, past giants with flanges about their trunks between which one might stable horses, by the banks and through the channels of crystal streams fringed with great bulrushes, while around and above us were palms and vines, trees and plants in indescribable variety. Crossing a plain of high grass and fervent heat we approached, amid cries of "orokolo" (peace), a small but beautifully clean village. Here they came and laid wooden bowls of sago, boiled yams, and baked plantains before us as offerings. I know the local white man's reply to this would be—"Yes, but they always expect a *quid pro quo*," literally in this case a few bits of tobacco ; but one who has wandered alone into spots where no white man has had a

chance to teach this detestable doctrine of nothing for nothing, told me that in such places it was not so. In what part, I wonder, of civilized and Christian England or Australia could a hungry man walk into a town or village and have the best its people possessed put at his feet unasked, and on the off-chance of being paid for?

After a rest we continued our march, and at 1.15 reached the big village of the Bakai tribe, Kandarita by name, being welcomed, as before, with calls of "orokolo." This custom on the part of the Berindiri has led to their being called "Orokolos," which is both misleading and incorrect, as "orokolo" is a word in their language merely meaning "peace," and possessing no tribal significance whatever.

We camped in the middle of the village, which was built on a circular piece of land near a stream, and surrounded by tropical vegetation, and, while the houses were flimsy, and of poor construction, the ground they stood on was absolutely bare of grass, being swept so clean that a man might literally eat his dinner off it, save for the danger of getting his head cracked by the nuts that every now and then fell from the trees dotted over it. Strolling about, we noticed twelve poles set in a row, completely hidden by cocoa-nuts from base to summit, and were told that this was done partly as a sign of prosperity, partly as a means of storing the nuts for future planting. All the men

we met were most friendly, but when one began to feel my arms in a creepy, affectionate, approving sort of way, I began to realise with a pang that I was the only decent eating in the party!

Another humourist began to lift his leg over imaginary obstacles, to the accompaniment of facial contortions suggestive of pain, and in a moment I remembered that I had been helping my "gammy" leg over the logs we met with that day. Doubtless one of the carriers had told the story, and I fancy my mimic had reacted my hobbling only too well, judging from the effect he had on Herbert and Little. But he was a good-hearted fellow for all his fun at my expense, for he took us to a little deformed child, and I am sure tried to ask us if we could help it. Indeed, they all seemed ready to take or make a joke, which, of course, on either side had to be cracked by gesture, facial or otherwise, and I thought they were very nice and polite to laugh at some of Herbert's efforts.

The only women we saw were old and past praying for, but one ancient dame fascinated me alike with her ugliness and appetite. She sat under the raised floor of a hut beside a little fire, her head caked over with white clay, her limbs too thin to cast a shadow, and ate, it seemed to me, for hours, solemnly, methodically, persistently. Sometimes a little pig would come along, and she

would fondle it against her withered breasts and share a plantain with it, and then hunt it away and reach for a yam. George reckoned she was in mourning for a husband. I shouldn't wonder! I only envy him the joy he must have known when death became a certainty.

Many of the men were Apollos in bronze, and I was told that the young women were as a rule of fine physique, but we saw none of them, all having left the village before our arrival.

As an instance of their natural honesty these natives carry hundreds of pounds worth of store-keepers' and miners' goods from Buna Bay to the Yodda without even one white man in charge, and nothing is ever stolen. Where among Christian peoples can a better record be shown, and I wonder if they themselves will show as good a one after enjoying the blessings of civilisation for a few years?

Monckton told me that only two white men had been in this village before us—himself and Bishop Stone-Wigg—so we saw it surrounded by a practically inviolate rampart of virgin forest, its people as yet untainted, just children of Nature and the Sun.

As evening fell men and women poured in from all sides laden with plantains, pumkins, paw paws, melons, mangoes, sugar cane, taro, yams, and other fruits, and as they reached its borders, the whole village greeted them with a rich, deep booming note



of welcome indescribably grand. Then as I sat writing outside my fly they came and laid offerings of fruit at my feet, and rising I thanked them in dumb show and with all the dignity pyjamas leave a man.

As I lay in my hammock that night—one of four white men among hundreds of black ones—the other side of the picture rose before me. How these undoubtedly charming people had till quite recently eaten their prisoners, just tying their arms and legs together like a pig, then thrusting a stick through and cooking them alive by holding them over a slow fire, and how, in proof thereof, some of them had been kind enough that very evening when Monckton was absent to show me a charred skull, and, while apologising for having only one, to explain that there were quite a lot at the next village, and how that afternoon I had seen them roasting pigs not dead, until stopped by the native police; but who was I to cavil at this last, seeing I belong to a race that boils its lobsters alive in their shells? Still, all things considered, I thanked God that undeveloped peoples so tersely and truly described by Kipling as “half devil, half child” never seemed to realise their strength nor our too frequent weakness.

We marched again into the forest at 7.20, the villagers sending after us their rich note of farewell. After a walk of one and a half hours, through dense bush and hot patches of grass, we

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struck the Yodda Road once more, and tramping on through splendid aisles of timber, came to a picturesque river, on whose farther bank we had "Ki Ki," a term used for all food by the natives, be it early or late as to time, human or otherwise as to substance.

Here I saw some unstudied poses such as Phidias would have loved. Two boys asleep under a tree, graceful as fauns, a man lying on a bank resting, each rounded limb a study in lithe contour and agile strength. These men are nude save for, in some cases, a narrow breech clout, so no excrescence of clothes as yet hides or curbs their natural grace or saps a vitality absorbed direct from the sun. I was told they are a virtuous people, not passionate, and holding in abhorrence unnatural crimes. Unlike the South-Eastern tribes, their hair is shaved back from the forehead and worn in short slender curls cut square about the nape of the neck, which, with their type of features, suggested the Egyptians of the Pharaohs. Others when decorated with war plumes are not unlike American Indians, while many, if white and dressed for the part, would be accounted distinctly clever-looking professional men of the physically handsome type.

On resuming our march, we waded through lakes of grass breast high (the path so narrow that we had to brush the stems aside), and bordered by towering trees, vines from thirty to forty feet long



CROSSING THE GIRIURI.



(and thick as ropes) hanging from them, while over all glowed a wealth of colour, which rain and sun alone can give. Then, hot and sweltering, we reached the end of the last patch, and passing once more into the shaded distances of the forest track, got into camp just ahead of the rain.

Before arriving, we passed over the ends of Mount Lamington's lowest spurs (they were scarcely perceptible by the way), and were told that this part of the road was found by lucky accident. It appears that the officer, seeking in vain for a practicable trek through the ravines, chanced upon an ancient man sitting gazing fixedly aloft into a tree. He promptly secured him, and later with his help marked out the present road, the old gentleman when captured explaining that he was the hereditary snarer of birds of paradise, hence the absorbed attitude which resulted in his undoing.

Above our camp bird-nest ferns swung from ropes of creepers in mid-air, then, as day grew dim, the great green leaves grew more sombre, the forest yet more still, the drowsy song of the stream a lullaby, until only the occasional collapse of an overwrought platform brought us back out of the land of dreams.

Then the call of the cricket (known as the New Guinea clock) told us the sun had set out beyond the clouds and the forest. For rain or shine, this insect with unfailing accuracy hails the going down

of the day-god, and men set watches by it, as in cities they regulate their time from the one o'clock gun.

In the morning we did twelve miles at a pace which took it out of my leg, the country being densely-wooded, and in parts we marched through acres of old native gardens, overgrown and full of wild plantains. One of the first things that must strike a visitor, accustomed to even the sprawliness of much of our Australian farming, is the almost universal Papuan custom of deserting a garden after a year or so and starting a fresh one, the old one, I was told, being often left unused and utterly neglected for ten or twelve years. Admitting that the food grown may take a lot out of the soil, it still appears to me that the present primitive method will yet yield to closer cultivation and better returns when once the example set by Government and private plantations becomes more general and manifest, but even if not, there is still plenty of land in Papua for both white and brown to work each on his own system without hurt or injustice to one another.

Every now and then we crossed beautiful streams by means of single logs, sometimes from thirty to seventy feet long, and often slippery as glass, but as a result of practice we began to sail over them at full pace.

On the morning that we regained the Yodda Road, a benevolent and venerable patriarch joined

us. His strongly-marked features were Indian in type as was his hair, worn long and straight on the shoulders: his only garment was a cotton shirt brown as himself. I am not yet clear as to whether he was prophet, priest, or king, but anyhow, with a bamboo pipe in one hand and a staff in the other, he headed the procession for several days, a veritable Papuan Moses leading us through the wilderness.

At lunch hour about a hundred men and women came in from outlying villages bearing loads of sugar-cane, pumpkins, taro, and yams for their friends and to sell—and so fruitful a land is this that from now on such visits became of daily occurrence. As I looked in interested surprise at the evidence of nature's prodigal response to man's primitive efforts, a dainty little maiden put a bunch of bananas at my feet with a gesture graceful as it was shyly modest. She could not have been more than twelve, but was fast ripening into womanhood, and her slight yet perfect limbs, small wrists and ankles, and delicately proportioned feet and hands, recalled to my mind Brahmin ladies bearing water to wash the vessels of the gods in Southern India.

After we pitched camp one of our carriers climbed a tree, fully a hundred feet high, by tying his ankles together with fibre and just shinning up. Many of these great trees have no tap roots, and on wet nights (and all our nights were seas of

tropical rain) we could hear them crashing to their doom out in the blackness of the forest. As there is nothing for it but to camp in and under timber in this part of Papua, this peculiarity on the part of the trees adds a fresh excitement to travel, particularly on windy nights.

While in camp a man came to us showing by signs that his head was aching. Poor fellow, his forehead was all scored with cuts—the native method of relieving pain. Later we heard a great commotion among the carriers, and discovered he had started to run amok but had been promptly suppressed. Monckton dosed him and next day he was doing his share as if nothing had happened. This is another possibility that helps to lift Papuan journeys out of the region of the humdrum.

Starting at 6.50 we did the first five miles in great form, constantly crossing streams on logs and “sloshing” through wet patches, for we were on falling ground to the Kumusi River, a broad, rapid, and picturesque stream where first we touched its right bank.

Near here some years ago two diggers were caught, cooked and eaten. Whether they had sinned, or suffered for the sins of others, or if it was just a murderous desire to slay on the part of the natives, I cannot say. Be that as it may, their death was an awful one. For a mate, who was absent when the capture took place, followed and from cover saw their legs broken and heard







CROSSING THE KUMUSI.

their screams of agony as they slowly died over the cooking fires. I was told that after his escape his brain went and that he died a madman, and I can easily believe this part of the story if the rest be true.

One evening George asked an old warrior which of the flesh foods tickled his palate most. Literally translated he answered "fowl—fair, pig—good, man—incomparably best." That settled, he was questioned as to which type of man he preferred—white or black, and to our surprise replied, "Native, white too salt and taste too much of tobacco."

We camped on the river bank in a native-built Government house raised about eight feet off the ground, the walls being round thin poles, the floor split soft-wood slabs, the roof palm-thatched, and a covered platform running round the four sides. Just in front, the Kumusi, here confined between high banks, rushed swiftly by, on the opposite shore a meadow of dense kangaroo-grass spread, bounded by wooded ranges stretching away to our right front. On our left rose Mount Monckton, its rugged peak shooting 8,000 feet into a cloud-strewn sky. Behind us were the tropical forest, and all about us the palm-shelters of our carriers—now swelled to 180 with friends and relations, and all full, and happy and natural, and in the main as naked and as independent of the tariff as Adam and Eve.

Two of our police, evidently single men, had

covered their dark mops of hair with lime to dye it auburn, and it had just the effect of well put on powder.

After dark, and following a great tooting of wooden horns (which means, I understand, "don't shoot, we are friends"), people poured in amid a welcoming chorus from our men, bearing a pig slung on a staff, poles covered with nuts, sugarcane, taro, pumpkins, and all the tropical fruits that love sun and shower, and laid the whole—the pig undermost—in a heap before our house. Verily this is a land of plenty. This formality over, Sergeant Beregi took charge. Everything was placed either singly or in little pyramids in two rows, and with scant or no bargaining, Beregi (who evidently knew local values to half a pipeful) marched along throwing his price in tobacco on each lot. "Take it or leave it" appeared to be his motto, and in every case they took it and walked off, to all seeming satisfied.

The hills looked lovely when at 7.15 Little and I crossed the Kumusi in a cage—so called. This cage is in reality a round stick to sit on, with two ropes above to cling to, and is hauled over the water along a single wire rope. Once on the other bank we started, Herbert waiting while Monckton sorted out his carriers and sent the hangers-on about their business.

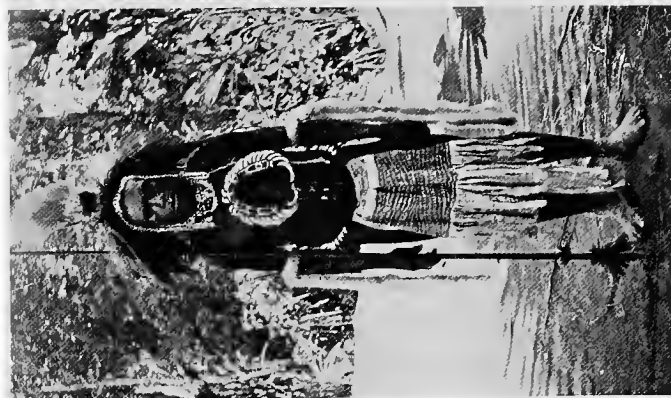
Leaving the river, we pushed on for six miles, passing over several most picturesque native

suspension bridges. In constructing these, vines are used as cables, and trees take the place of stone or steel towers on each bank. Some have floors of split soft-wood lashed in place with fibre, the protecting rails being vines pulled taut. Others are all cane, three or four being stretched across and tied in places for foothold, while the sides are of an open wicker-work. One we crossed had, I should say, a span of sixty feet, and the way our loaded carriers passed without mishap over its swaying uncertain length, was a lesson in balance I shall not readily forget.

After one and a half miles of roasting grass-patch we reached Rocky Creek, to find the bridge swept away, so there was nothing for it but to await the arrival of the rest of the party. Meanwhile our two police began to cut down trees. In a short time up the rest came, and fifteen minutes later had thrown across a bridge of logs, three feet wide and quite sixty feet long, using rocks as rests, and tying the butts together with vines. Over this we all, including the heavily-laden bearers, marched without accident, and as we watched the passage from the farther bank I realised how useful such self-reliant, natural engineers might be from a soldier's standpoint.

While Herbert was telling me how Monckton got all his men and stores safely over the Kumusi, with the exception of one of our boxes, dropped

out of the cage, but somehow rescued, the chain-gang, hot and weary, came up and plunged into the water ; but one, a sorcerer, stood gazing with gloomy eyes on his companions in misfortune, for if with, he was in no sense of, creatures he could even now terrify with one pass of his manacled hands. His presence reminded me of one of Dr. Jones' stories. A native who had been employed in Burn Philp's store at Samarai for over two years, suddenly went sick. He was sent to the doctor, who at once frankly told him he could do no good, the case being one of sorcery. Dr. Jones asking particulars, he explained that his young wife, by means of witchcraft, had put a stone axe, a lot of fishing-line, and a cooking pot inside him, and that only a sorcerer could possibly get them out. While professional pride forbade Jones to admit this last statement, he tried to reason him out of his weird belief, but without avail. The man went away, grew daily worse, and one day disappeared. About a fortnight later the doctor met him again, looking fit and well, and after congratulating him, asked how he was cured. "Oh," said the native, "it was just as I told you. I went to the village sorcerer, and he took an axe, a broken pot, and a lot of twine out of my side, and now I am as well as ever I was." This story is interesting, as showing how futile intercourse with white men often is to kill old beliefs, and also the blind faith of the patient, which enabled



CANDIDATE FOR POSITION OF  
VILLAGE CONSTABLE.



THE SAME IN UNIFORM. [106





the sorcerer to make him believe he actually took the articles out through his side.

The scene here was exquisite, the water to all appearance rushing out of shadow-land right into the heart of a steep, wooded hill. At noon we again started, meeting stream after stream, clear as crystal, and pure as the source whence they came. How the two police, who carried us shoulder high over some of them, kept their feet among the stones that always strew their bottoms I cannot explain ; I only remember with gratitude that they always did. Here and there we met lengths of corduroy, with rickety, if artistic, native bridges, then we reached a stream both wide and rapid over which George insisted on carrying me. Taking me on his back and holding a policeman by each hand, he tramped across breast high and over awful boulders without a slip or stagger. When we got to the bank the dear old chap told me in an apologetic tone that " he was fairly strong in the seventies."

Soon after, we had to take to the bed of a gorge, clinging by roots to its sides, the foothold being often a matter of inches, then, on crossing the slippery head of a beautiful waterfall, sheer in front of us rose "The Divide."

It was only about 250 feet high, but so nearly perpendicular that a slip meant a roll half-way to the bottom, and after the level country the climb landed me at the top just a breathless bit of wet

rag ; and yet our carriers went up and down it for water as coolly as if it had been a patent lift. Before the rain set in we got from its summit our first panoramic view of the country we had so far left behind.

During the day we had walked over a "purple patch " or so, not long dry as years are counted. On one, an officer coming up the track had chanced upon a band of natives eating their prisoners by the wayside, and had shot a number of them. On another, the raiders had burnt the village of the victims.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE YODDA FIELDS AND KOKODA.

The Mambare—Kokoda—The Yodda—A Close Call—The Grim Tragedy of it All—God's Acre—Men we Met—The Field—A Clean Up—Future Possibilities—Relics of an Older Race—We Leave the Yodda—We Part with Little—Kokoda once more—The Station Buildings—Early Morning Parade—Three Attributes of a Good Soldier—Stories of the A.N.C.—A Man who should be Laid by the Heels—A Dance under the Stars—A Garden of Plenty—A Land of Untold Possibilities—A Splendid Lot—The Route is Chosen—The Sorrows of a Photographer.

LEAVING the Divide at 6.40 next morning we met some rough walking over roots and sidelings, and as usual constantly crossed streams, some spanned by a single slippery log, others by wicker-work suspension bridges, and eventually touched the Mambare, a broad and lovely river running through and over huge pebbles, its water clear as glass. For a time we hugged its right bank, then turning into a native garden, once 300 acres of tropical plenty, now, thanks either to native habit or white intrusion—I am not clear which—a tangled and overgrown waste, we saw above us the buildings of Kokoda, the farthest inland Government Station in Papua. Here the police, under Mr. Naylor, Assistant Resident Magistrate, turned out and came to attention in great style. Here also we got a hot shower, and an afternoon of rest. That night I thought I had fever, but it proved to be a case of mistaken identity, poor Monckton being

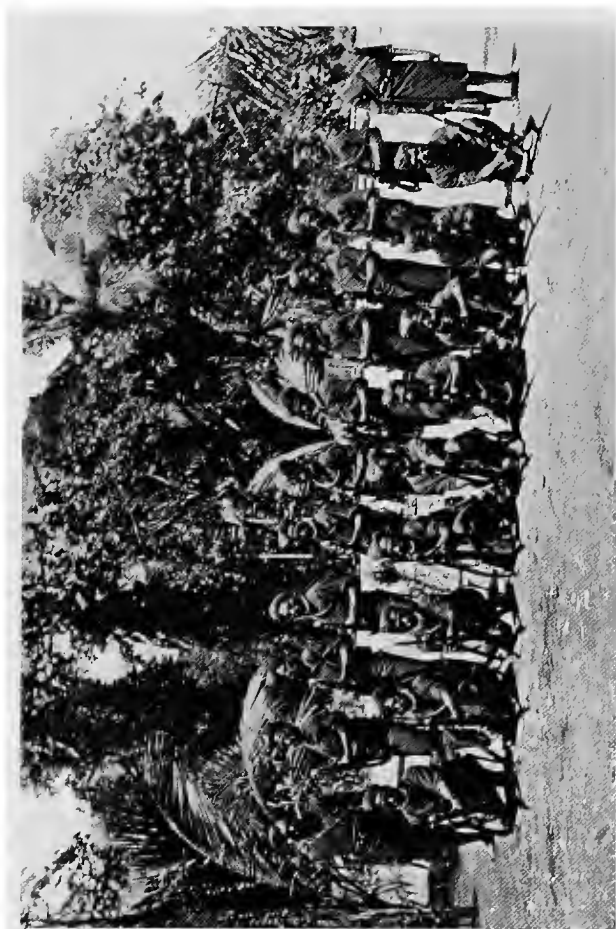
the victim, so we left him to fix up for tackling the mountains, and started at eight next morning for the Yodda, Mr. Naylor taking charge for the trip. Entering the forest we picked up the Buna-Yodda Road, and keeping the mountains on our left again met, beautiful as before, and ever fed by lesser tributaries, the Mambare flowing swiftly to the sea.

Passing over logs, some seventy feet long, we went through a deserted village. Here a magistrate, named Walker, once nearly lost his life, for he was actually seized, but thanks to great presence of mind and pluck, managed to pull his revolver behind his back, and so shot the native who was holding him.

The road here was hedged with plants, just bits plucked off the parent bushes, and stuck in by carriers as they went by, for flowers are, in a sense, a passion with these people. Crossing over a ravine on a three-logged bridge, and later a river, we halted, and I again realised how good a fruit paw paw was, and how refreshing to the weary soul.

Resuming our march we struck some worked-out ground, then passed Mr. Rockfort's sluicing claim and native house, and scrambling on over old races, roots, and along a narrow-topped ridge, dropped down on two stores and—nothing more. Yet this was one of our objectives, the Yodda Goldfield. Never was a spot more unlike the





KOKODA SQUAD, ARMED NATIVE CONSTABULARY.

diggings of song and story, and drama, and yet to reach it men have left love and home, and certain work and sure safety, have died in fever swamps amid unknown mountains, by slow starvation, by swift and treacherous spear and club; and many have gone from it broken in pocket and in health, while still a remnant remain paying in strength and hard won gold for the dubious privilege of doubtful gain and certain exile from all that most men prize.

So in very truth the dimly-remembered cradle-songs of dead or distant mothers, the stories of high hopes that died on river beaches, or were buried deep in barren gulches, the dramas of ruined lives and lonely deaths all have their part and place in the short unknown but deeply tragic history of those who have sought "for the immortal fire Prometheus stole from Heaven," on the Mambare, the Gira, and the Yodda fields.

We pitched our camp in a potato patch on the edge of the forest, facing the valley and the ranges; behind, and higher up the slope, rest the bodies of those so fortunate as to find a friendly hand to cover their poor bones. Some little time before our coming Bishop Stone-Wigg, with kindly thought, held a service in this acre, forgotten by all but God and an odd old mate or so, at which the miners attended, then when he had finished, a digger, full of whisky and gratitude, rose and solemnly moved a vote of thanks to him. Poor

fellows all, so far it has been a hopeless life, with only the squalid joy of an occasional carouse for most, with certain mental rot for all.

The miners we met were in the main men of considerable personality, and several were well educated, one having held a good social position in Australia before he took up life in Papua; another was a rector's son, and a gentleman still, but he told me he had now no one in the old country who wanted him, and so he meant to live and die where he was.

Most of the claims are some distance from the stores, and scattered at that, Little's being ten miles away, which all says much for the diggers' recklessness or the natives' peacefulness—probably a good deal for both. So far as I could learn, the average miner takes no precautions, often going to his work and leaving his gun to look after itself and his hut. If this be so, I hold that it is alike foolish from a personal standpoint and unfair to the native, as putting an unnecessary temptation in his way. Still, the fact that all this is possible proves to my mind that a big majority of the diggers treat the natives fairly, and their women with respect.

We went into the valley and saw a "cleaning up," the digger washing three dishes, but only getting fair colours. The "boys," of whom men employ from four or five to thirty or forty, according to their means or needs, do all the manual labour,



the digger attending to the "clean up," which, I understand, took place on an average once a fortnight. So far as I could see they just sluice everything on a face, piling the big boulders out of the way, and putting the rest through primitive boxes.

We were told that men, sometimes in spite of high prices, cleared from £500 to £1,000 as the result of a year's work, but even so, I doubt if the Yodda has a future as a poor man's diggings under present conditions. Fresh patches may be discovered, but if it is to take its place as a permanent field, capital—either Government or private—must be forthcoming. So far the true bottom has not been struck, and to sink through the conglomerate in search of it means money. No reef has yet been discovered, yet the gold must come from one. Mr. Monckton reports that he saw well defined reefs on the faces of Mount Albert Edward—why not in other and even nearer ranges—but no ordinary digger could bear the cost of such prospecting. Hydraulic sluicing will yet, I believe, pay, and pay well, but not until a practicable mule-road makes possible the carriage of machinery to, and cheapens the necessities of life on, the field. Some day I believe one or all of these things may happen, and if so I hope the plucky men who have lived on hope so long will still be there to reap their just reward.

Though they have not in the Yodda unearthed

all the gold one wishes them, they have brought to light evidence of the existence of an earlier and more developed race, for twelve feet down in the wash, stone-bowls, round, shallow, and with a simple but clearly defined pattern cut on the rim, have been discovered. In other parts the stone-heads of cassowaries have been found, used by the present natives as charms to protect their gardens from harm, but about which these people really know nothing. In these also the workmanship evidences a higher skill than is displayed by the Papuan, while in digging into some mounds in the midst of a village in Collingwood Bay, broken pottery was unearthed, redder in colour, harder in texture, and bearing a design totally superior to any made by the natives of to-day. All this points to finds of deep historic value, being not only possible but inevitable in this most interesting but little known island.

Saying good-bye to our digger friends, who all wished us good luck in our attempt to march from "sea to sea," both on our own account and also, as one put it, "because if we reached Port Moresby in good health we would have established a record," we made a start a little after six, mists rising in white shafts and rolling billows off the hills that keep watch and ward over the valley.

At the foot of the ridge we parted with Little, our companion of many days, and my particular comrade on the march, for all through we had





GOVERNMENT STATION AT KOKODA.

walked together, and a right good mate he had been. Ever a speculator and a born gold seeker, more I feel sure for the sake of adventure than for mere sordid lust of gain, he was off to try his fortune on the Waria, a "rush" then in all men's mouths. The following extract from a letter since received from him tells of some novel personal experiences, and one more "duffer." He says:—"Monckton and I started for the Waria, and had a very rough trip, having to do things crossing rivers on native bridges that would have drawn a crowd in Sydney willing to pay to see us perform. We got on well with the natives, who were all bow-and-arrow men, the country passed through being very thickly populated. All their houses were full of skeletons, whether of friends or enemies I could not say, as we could not talk to them. They also, unlike any other natives I have met in Papua, had an idea of flower gardens round their houses. The plants were chiefly crotons arranged in nice order. After three months' wandering I had to leave. There is gold, but we found nothing payable, at least not payable after reckoning distance from the coast and consequent ruinous cost of living. Something may be found richer by the eight men remaining, but I don't think it will ever support many."

Kokoda is a most radiant spot, set high on the edge of a small plateau. At the rear and right virgin forests fence it about, in front, in a basin,

grow all things that tell of shade—great plantain fronds, broad and spacious as green sails, and many another plant with leaves of varied hue and shape, and all gigantic. About this basin dwell trees tall and stately, courted of lovely parasites. Near by the water flows, and then the mountains rise fold on fold till Mount Victoria pierces the sky at 12,000 feet. To see the mists rising out of their ravines, rolling athwart their slopes, and breaking into fleecy fragments against their topmost peaks, is to stand with God and gaze with humbled eyes upon the work of His Omnipotent hands.

The house is native, rambling and picturesque, and the garden full of all rich tones of colour. There are really three houses built on piles, and connected by covered passages, balconies running round all, and quaint porches rising over the steps that lead down into the garden, the whole being evolved from sago bark, palm leaves, and native wood, bound together with cane and loya vine.

The morning after our arrival I was awakened by the sound of sharp, familiar words of command, and looking out saw Mr. Naylor putting the Armed Native Constabulâry through some simple movements in the Barrack Square, and a smart and soldierly lot they looked in their dark blue jumpers, low cut at the neck and short in the sleeves, with red braiding, their sulas held in position by a black bayonet belt, a full bandolier





THE MAIN OWEN STANLEY RANGE.



over the shoulder, 0·303 carbines in their hands, and neat forage caps (with the bird-of-paradise badge) cocked jauntily on the side of their crisp black heads. These caps have been abolished on the score of economy, and, like their white brethren in arms, the Armed Native Constabulary have bitterly resented being robbed of their plumes. I was told the Northern detachment were about the only ones who now possessed them, and that they cherish them, fondly carrying them in safe places, and only sporting them when meeting a bareheaded squad. Personally I think the saving alike both paltry and foolish, for fine feathers make fine birds, be they white or black.

After Naylor (who by-the-way had seen service in South Africa with one of the Victorian contingents and showed all the snap of a smart officer) had shaken them up, a Kawai sergeant drilled them, also by English words of command. Doubtless his vocabulary was strictly limited, still it was a beginning capable, I feel sure, of expansion if only this question is seriously and methodically faced by officials. The work done was in the main excellent, and I was told, and quite believe, that these fellows are proud of their uniform, obedient to discipline, and keen fighters.

Monckton told me a story of one of them worth repeating. During an expedition behind the Hydrographers he got into a scrap, and his sergeant drew his attention to a man who had grounded

his carbine. Asked why, he said his relations were among the attacking party, so as a matter of precaution Monckton ordered the sergeant to take charge of his carbine, and in the press of the fight forgot all about him until matters, becoming really critical, he saw him at his side firing away with the best. "I thought you wouldn't risk killing your people," said Monckton. "Neither I would," replied the policeman, "if you could have beaten them off without me, but now that they may kill you it becomes a totally different affair," and went on shooting as if nothing had happened. On another occasion during a fight a native coming on a policeman whose carbine had choked, thrust a spear clean through his right arm, but like a flash the latter jumped back, drew it out with his left, and drove it through his enemy's chest. Indeed, it appears impossible to kill or cripple these men by ordinary methods, for we had with us one fellow who not so long before walked into a hidden spear trap, a hole about five feet deep in which were a number of spears, point up; while another had his head all dented from the blows of an axe wielded by a prisoner named O'Brien when escaping from Kokoda gaol. Still both men were as good as new.

The case of this man O'Brien is interesting as showing how a mistake on the part of a keen, but at the time somewhat inexperienced, officer aroused a certain feeling of sympathy in the minds of

decent men totally unwarranted so far as this dangerous criminal was concerned, and even under the circumstances only to be accounted for as the outcome of a somewhat quixotic sense of abstract justice. Why no serious attempt has been made to bring this man to trial is a question the authorities should be asked alike in the interests of the magistrate, the men, and the upholding of justice and order in a country dependent for its future peace on a strict observance of both the one and the other.

At night some hundreds of natives, and the Armed Native Constabulary all decked for the occasion, danced in the square to the sound of drum and swelling chorus. Out of the darkness they came in phalanxes, each dusky band moving in a figure of its own. The rattling of spears struck on the ground, and the guttural cries of the dancers, the booming drums, and weird, uncanny chants rose into the still, cloudless night from out a setting of tropical forest, and above a scene of primal abandon. I was told these men dance on for hours, once the ecstasy of motion floods their brain, and indeed, as I watched, I could see the same spirit that moves the Dervish to whirl until he sinks to earth with froth-dyed lips, shining out of the eyes of some of them.

Everything about Kokoda, police barracks, married men's quarters, garden, and drill yard, was alike as clean and well ordered as the strictest

quartermaster could wish for, and yet it was all so native as to blend with, rather than show as an excrescence amid, its surroundings. Situated at the foot of the main range and 1,000 feet above sea level, the climate is, from a tropical standpoint, good, while the plateau is rich almost beyond belief. As an illustration, in the station garden (thirty acres being under cultivation) there grew taro, yams, sweet-potatoes, bananas (I saw fifteen dozen in one bunch), Indian corn, coconuts, betel-nuts, paw paws, granadillas, pine-apples, chillies, oranges, lemons, English cabbages, carrots, parsnips, radishes, lettuces, French beans, melons, and swede turnips.

Cocoa should do well, but coffee would do better on sloping lands, while all the surrounding tribes grow sugar, though I was told it flourished best on the upland slopes. During the twelve months preceding our arrival, an average of about fifty police, prisoners, and carriers were fed from the produce of an average area of twenty acres under cultivation for that period. The character of the soil is a rich, dark, sandy loam, and I was told that 1200 acres on the plateau would soon be declared Crown lands, and that 160 square miles additional had been gazetted as such, starting from Kokoda and extending as far as McLaughlin's Creek, twelve miles north of the Yodda field.

From Kokoda right back to Buna Bay, the country is magnificently watered, level, and heavily

timbered, and judging from the quantities of cane, vegetables, and fruit brought in by the natives all along the route, must be rich. With the exception of the Kumusi River, and even this can be crossed at a ford a short distance from the wire bridge, and the Divide, which could be made practicable for pack traffic at a comparatively small cost, the present track is to-day possible for horses and mules during the dry season. So there are no insurmountable natural obstacles in the path of development from the sea to Kokoda, when the right men choose to tread it.

During the afternoon we saw 260 carriers lined up for inspection, and a splendid lot they were.

That night Monckton decided to abandon the route over the Gap and to try a new one just discovered by Mr. Bruce, which a young fellow who had come with the Commandant declared to be, if steeper, and attaining to a greater altitude, still more direct. He mentioned incidentally that we should have to walk along the edge of a 2,000 foot precipice for a hundred yards or so, but after all a precipice more or less does not count for much when crossing the roof of Papua.

Later I nearly broke my neck, for mooning along with a lamp I was awakened to the enormity of my offence by a yell from George, and a glow of red light, and hurriedly trying to run down some steps soaked with rain, slipped and landed at the bottom with two barked shins. Poor Herbert was

trying to remove plates in an improvised dark room with George on guard to scare away natives and other idiots with lights.

What the Judge suffered in the cause of photography no man save himself knoweth ; what he said is fortunately hushed for ever in the forests of Papua. For the first part of our walk the camera was never up when wanted, then Monckton gave it to a policeman who just haunted Herbert night and day. He tried the gaol, and the prisoners lit matches ; the house, and I nearly spoilt the whole set, but all these experiences paled before the operation of changing plates on the march, when he had to block the ends of his fly, crawl under a blanket, and eventually emerge half smothered and streaming with perspiration, each falling drop representing tissue he grudged to lose, which reminds me that I was weighed at the Yodda and turned the scale at 11 st. 4 lb., having lost 12 lb. since Buna Bay.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ACROSS THE MAIN RANGE.

The Costume of Experience—Farewell Kokoda—We Leave the Last Outpost Behind—We Climb the Mountain's Face—A Last Look at Kokoda—Leeches and Scrub-Itch—At the 4,272 feet Level—Getting Down—The Ascent of the Main Range—The Land of Palms and Moss—The Land of Glittering Silence—We Fall 1,000 feet—Where Perchance the Fairies Dance—The Carriers' Task—The Frozen Carriers—We ascend once more—8,690 feet above the Sea—A Vision Splendid—Another Mountain Camp—The Gap—Orchids—A Sword of Water—Two Carriers go Sick—Serigina—Only one more Hill—Pitching Camp under Difficulties—Bruce answers our Shots—A few Earnest, Simple Words—Kagi—The Commandant—The Future Road—He Never Expected to See Us—Tea and Whisky—Albert Edward—The King of the Range—Beregi—Calm, Cold, and Silent—In the Mist Sea—We Lose our old Escort and Carriers—Farewell to Monckton.

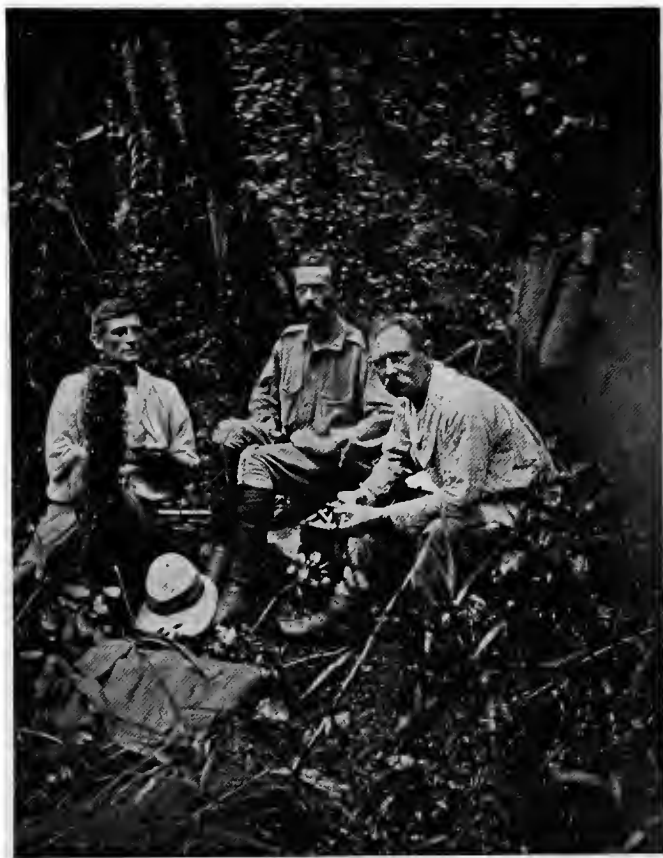
As we stood ready to leave Kokoda our marching kit gave evidence of experience gained since we went over the side of the *Merrie England*. Herbert's English shooting boots had given place to bluchers, while since a day out from Buna Bay I had discarded putties as a weariness of the flesh, and now instead tucked the ends of a pair of light loose trousers into my socks, these with either a digger's flannel or a Jaeger undershirt, and stout boots and a topi are all a man wants for this class of work in Papua. The great secret of comfort in a clammy climate being freedom for legs and arms, and for health, flannel next the chest, and a complete change on getting into camp. A policeman now carried my revolver and water-bottle, for in

a land like this even a grasshopper would become a burden.

At nine o'clock on October 26th we left lovely Kokoda, passing through an avenue half a mile long, plantains, and taro growing on each side, and plants with radiant leaves lining the broad straight road. Then leaving it, and parting with cut tracks for good and all, we put the last outpost of the white man behind our backs, and plunging into the virgin forest, scrambled over roots and logs and along creeks for about an hour—and then up the mountain's face. With breathers every 100 feet or so up we went getting foothold as best we could, now dropping for a little, but only to rise again. At noon we halted on a steep slope, and facing about saw Mount Lamington, and all the way we had travelled from the sea spread out before us. We were now 3,200 feet above sea-level, and had risen 2,200 above Kokoda. Starting again we dropped for a while, and creeping along some nervy places reached camp without mishap ahead of the rain. Striking camp at 7.45 next morning we clambered over rocks and trees and along the edge of things till we reached a village perched above the valley.

Later we had a great view of the Yodda valley with Kokoda showing dimly, and the clouds rolling up the sides of the distant ranges, and then we started on a wild downward career, descending by gripping roots, rocks, and saplings, with every





RESTING.

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RIGHT—Col. MACKAY. CENTRE—Mr. MONCKTON. LEFT—Mr. Justice HERBERT.



now and then a slide ; while in places the drop was almost sheer. At the bottom we came on a rushing torrent fed by a waterfall that shot out of a wooded mountain and plunged down in a stream of living light. Round us rose great walls of hills, the mist clinging to their rugged fronts, while at our feet the foaming water flowed on over the rocks to bury itself again in the clefts of the ranges.

We were now in the region of leeches and scrub-itch, the former rising in the pad till they stood half erect, and fastening on to boots or the natives' legs as we walked ; while touching a bush frequently resulted in a leech hanging to a finger. They crawled through any opening in a boot, and if putties are not well rolled, or trousers not tucked into socks, one was apt to find blood in one's boots on reaching camp. The best method to dodge them is to send the carriers on ahead, and I have often seen ours scraping them off their legs with their long knives as they marched along.

Of itch, thank Heaven, we had small experience, but men have been nearly, if not quite, driven mad with it in parts of Papua.

Crossing the river on four wet and swaying poles we immediately began a climb as steep as our descent had been, the process now being reversed in that we pulled ourselves up instead of letting ourselves down. Reaching the top of the gorge we began to pitch camp on the 4,272 feet level, but the

rain beat us. Just as everything was fixed, they brought in a carrier who had slipped and fallen backward, his load on top of him. His liver was injured, and next day he had to go back, my only wonder being that he was not killed outright.

Starting at 7.15 we (clinging to roots) almost at once dived down into a ravine, and crossing a rushing torrent climbed up a face like the side of a house where a slip meant bruises if not breaks. Reaching the top, winded but intact, we began to ascend a spur of the main range, and after a solid climb of four hours, with frequent breathers,—the perspiration falling off hands and face in great drops—we passed into a new world. First the “Brocken” and then the “Fairy King’s Domain.” Here grew pandanus palms, and gradually as we rose the trees became covered in moss until it hung in festoons from every limb, and crowned with great coronets of sparkling gems and living green each leafless branch. Then all the prone logs became moss-grown couches, while under foot a carpet of springy verdure lay so thickly spread that it bore our weight, while we could thrust our staffs down several feet through the net-work of leaves and roots on which it lay.

As we moved on in silent wonderment, each stem we grasped was soft and cold, while when the sun broke through the mists the whole magic forest glittered with millions of crystal drops. So ever upward we made our way above cloud and



AT OWEN STANLEY RANGE, 8,301 FEET.

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mist alike, and entered the world of the nature spirits—cold, silent, lifeless, but supremely beautiful in its chaste contours and immeasurable breadth of vision—not after the fashion of the flesh, but rather of a great and snow-white soul. Then quickly we fell 1,000 feet, and camped in a wondrous spot in the bosom of the hills where two streams met. Here we had barely space to pitch our flies, the usual difficulty in these ranges, where flat surfaces are few and far between.

Above us the slender tree stems rose, festooned and clad as for the festival of some Titanic race, with garlands and caskets of moss, a radiant symphony in green, while beneath our feet the wedded streams flowed on through fronded ferns, and giant-leaved white and pink begonias. Here, perchance, the fairies driven by unbelief, and man's strange fear, from their old-world greens, still danced on moon-lit nights to the music of the rippling water, for it had all the uncanny loveliness of "the little people's" storied land.

After a time the carriers began to struggle round a bend and down the slippery, awful hill. How, laden as they were, they ever got to the bottom, save on their heads, I know not. I doubt if the depths of endurance possible to the best Papuan carriers have ever been plumbed, for they have been known to keep up with the Armed Native Constabulary during a pursuit through the hills.

We were all soaked in perspiration on arrival,

but after a hot douche were glad to pile on all the clothes we possessed, and the night closed in bitterly cold and wet. I slept in socks, underclothes, trousers, pyjamas, flannel shirt, "sweater," a cap, two pairs of blankets, and an overcoat, and still was not too warm. God only knows what the poor carriers suffered, for burning wood was so scarce and wet that some of their poles had to be sacrificed, and they were practically nude to a man. Huddled in heaps, they must have had a fearful time. In the morning some of them refused to go on, pleading that they would die, while to add to our anxiety Monckton was bad with fever. However, he was as plucky as they are made, and thanks to him we got away at eight, and at once, by aid of roots and saplings, began a fresh climb. Ever ascending—with an occasional level patch to cheer us on—we twisted among the moss-clad trees, and passed under lichen-hung arches, the ridge at times being so sharp that a swerve of a few feet either way would have toppled us over the edge and down the steep, unthinkable slope.

Then the trees grew more gnarled, the mosses richer, the silence one that could be felt—and at last we stood on one of the summits of the Owen Stanley Range, 8,690 feet above the sea, and out beyond the intervening valleys we caught glimpses of great distances, and saw toothed peaks, and broad plains, above and beneath the



clouds, for part of Papua lay stretched at our feet, and part rose in splendid isolation sheer through the mists that floated far above our heads.

Here stood the palace of the mountain king, and the sun breaking through his hoary rafters, all its dim corridors grew full of elfin light, while wondrous soft tones of colour tinted each sparkling column, caressed each moss-grown couch, and flushed with mellow glory all the rare tapestry hung within its fairy aisles. But time was pressing, so down we dropped by perilous sidelings, and sheer set paths, leaving the kingdom of mystery and silence and beauty behind, but catching rare glimpses of mountain peaks and great ravines, and spreading valleys as we came.

That night we camped well down the main range at an altitude of 6,786 feet, and consequently had a chilly time, but the wood was good, so the carriers could fight the cold and were happy. Monckton, too, was better, and so things looked promising for a good day to Kagi. But Kagi was further than we reckoned, and our guide was either a liar, or had woefully, if flatteringly, over-rated my walking powers when he told us "it was five hours away."

Breakfast over, the usual climb began, and landed us on the summit of a narrow ridge which had been burnt by natives. From here we got a grand view of the mountains we had come over—and away to our left saw, over the shoulder of a

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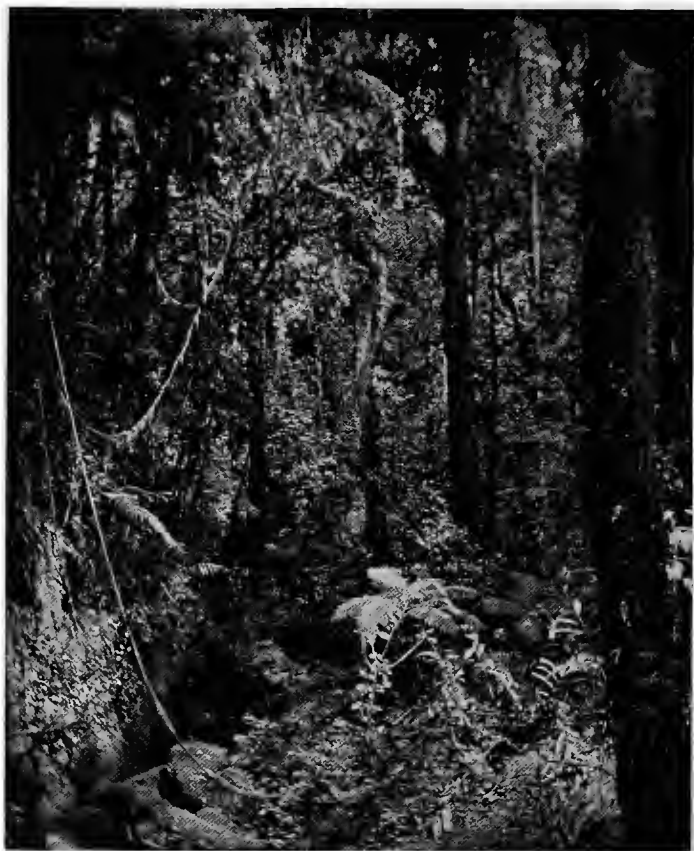
spur (down which ran an older track), the original Gap. Then down once more we went, sometimes along narrow crests, or clinging to their sides, then dropping sheer by aid of roots till we came upon two torrents, meeting above a waterfall—a lovely gorge upon each side. Here we felled a tree covered with orchids, and added them to one we had picked at 8,000 feet.

Scrambling up a watercourse we faced a steep grass hill bare of timber, and radiating untempered heat. Crawling up, we faced about and got a magnificent view of the ranges, a great peak piercing the clouds on our right, on our left long chains fading into dim distances, and in our front a great sword of water leaping out of the timber and piercing it again half-way down the mountain side. Crossing the crest, down we tramped through deserted native gardens, dodging old spear traps, and skirting the edge of a neck-or-nothing ravine, till hand-over-hand we landed in a delightful basin fed by a singing stream.

Starting again at two, word came from the rear that two of the carriers were dying, so Monckton asked us to push on with the guide to Kagi—said by that optimist to be over the next hill—while he attended to his men.

Having climbed about 2,000 feet and passed through gardens of taro, yams, and maize, we reached the village of Serigina, clean, and with a splendid outlook over the way we had come ; and





AT OWEN STANLEY RANGE, 8,690 FEET.

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gazing back at the piled-up peaks I registered a mental vow never to be so foolish again. The women here were tall and well-built, but the chief, a plausible, shop-walker type of savage in a dirty shirt, filled me with a dislike further acquaintance only intensified. I later found he was one of those who, not long before, had raided a village within eighteen miles of Port Moresby, killing all, both men and women, after ravishing the latter. I fancy he was used as a sort of informer. Personally, I regret that expediency so often permits such men to live.

When not far from the village we saw Monckton entering it, and as he shouted to us to go on, and as our infamous guide still informed us that we had only one more hill to cross, on we went, over another 2,000 feet of earth, followed by a whole series, till six o'clock and darkness arrived simultaneously.

As our guide when questioned as to the whereabouts of Kagi now helplessly pointed in two diametrically opposite directions, we decided to halt in a basin beside a stream, and presently up came Monckton with the sick men and a few police. Then the fun began—darkness, no lamps up, no flies, and a camp to pitch, with the rain, which for the first time during our trip had so far held off, momentarily expected. But our police were wonders, and by the time the moon rose the fly poles were cut and up, and things generally

straightening out. Meanwhile George had found some cocoa, but no sugar; anyway it was a Godsend, as we were still in our wet things, and chilled to the bone. Monckton then began to fire, in the hope of locating our missing carriers, and got an answering volley from Bruce's camp, but no response from the faithful Sergeant Beregi, who had been left to bring them along. Fears that they had missed the right spur now arose, and Monckton started back into the night to look for them. At 10.30 he returned, and we knew of his coming by some earnest, simple words he let drop as he picked himself up out of the bottom of the creek; soon after the carriers (who despite Beregi had stayed to feed at the village) arrived. Then we got food, our flies, and a change, and so all ended well. For the first and only time it did not rain at all. Had it done so we should have been in a bad way, for we had been marching from 7.45 a.m. to 6 p.m., and were dog-tired and wet through with perspiration, having climbed 7,500 feet in crossing three ranges alone, to say nothing of the ordinary everlasting up and down.

In the morning one of Bruce's men came in, and leaving at 7.40 we reached Kagi at 9.30, after crossing creeks, clambering over logs and roots, toiling up wooded slopes and through native gardens, with a long hot grass hill for the last lap.

Commandant Bruce, who was a veritable son of

Anak, brought his men to attention, and I took an excellent salute as we marched in.

The camp was pitched on a high plateau completely fenced in by mountains, save where one long valley wound through the encircling hills towards Port Moresby. Some day the road connecting Kagi with the capital will follow this route; the engineering difficulties at any rate as regards mule traffic being comparatively slight; meanwhile the native path leads up and down and along the crest of the ranges partly because the Papuan has no use for easy grades, principally for commissariat reasons, the villages being, as a rule, built on high ground.

Bruce had been here some months quieting the district, and had been marking time waiting our arrival, as in the event of that happening he was to relieve Monckton and escort us to Port Moresby. He frankly admitted that he never expected to see us, and so was most agreeably disappointed when we turned up fit and well and on time. Warned by our firing of the night before that we were approaching, he had done everything possible for our comfort, so we walked in to find a bush break erected, and all our fly poles up—and lighting our pipes we looked towards the sea, the Astrolabe Range showing dimly against a misty sky.

We had lost Little at the Yodda, and now the time had come to part with Monckton. At Buna Bay he had lent me his aluminium water bottle,

which since had been filled with tea each morning, a sip of it now and then being alike a comfort and a stimulant to me during the stiffest climb. I know that many people consider tea is a poison. Personally I can only say I have used it as a daily drink from Beira to Capetown; over 8,000 miles of India; and from sea to sea in Papua with such good results that I would never dream of drinking anything else in a tropical country, or when engaged on work that demanded constant and severe exertion. Whatever may be said for or against tea, one thing is beyond all possibility of denial—alcohol is the very worst drink a man can indulge in in Papua. It is directly responsible for more breakdowns than all the diseases put together, and indirectly accounts for an enormous percentage of malarial deaths and recurrences. Sir William McGregor, a medical man of great tropical experience, as a result of personal observation among missionaries and others, says “even the man that is temperate does not endure hardship or keep his health so long or so well as the total abstainer. What happens in the case of the drunkard must, I take it, be self-evident.” The natives who are practically universally free from alcoholic craving, call all liquor “silly white men’s medicine.” As regards Papua they could not give it a better name.

I had become quite fond of Monckton’s bottle, and so was more than pleased when he asked me



to keep it in memory of our trip. Indeed it was no common or parochial flask, for it had been with him when he climbed Mount Albert Edward, and so stood nearer the sky than any man before him in Papua.

During our march he told me many an interesting tale of his wanderings on that mysterious hill—how once the mists came racing after them as they were flying back to camp and safety, and how in the dim light they halted on the rim and verge of swift death, the mist rising above the brink of a precipice at their very feet. How in the heart of the mountain 10,000 to 12,000 feet above the sea he came on huge hunting lodges of the natives; and how one of his police walking alone met an animal described by him as a great pig, and became so terrified by the abnormal proportions of this new, yet ancient, relic of primal ages that all strength left him, and he would have miserably perished in the freezing night had not Oya, son of Bushimi, chanced upon him and hammered life and strength into him once more. But he did not hammer the vision out of his eyes, for next day he took Monckton to the spot and there sure enough were fresh rootings, and the marks of cloven hoof-prints. So from that day the policeman has been known among his comrades as “Ogi of pig fame.”

No snow crowns this king of all the range, but its heart is of ice and its breath freezes the marrow

in men's bones, and from its summit Monckton saw a land of forests, and plains, and lakes, and tumbled peaks, and winding from behind Mount Yule a track leading towards the Waria. He told me he was going to try to get back that way from the river to the sea. Since, I have been told, he did, wallowing for days in morasses and deadly swamps.

One of our escort I had grown to admire was Beregi, a non-com. above price, and when we were discussing the absolutely hopeless condition of Kokoda if ever seriously attacked, Monckton told me of another station now abandoned, but which then stood, cut off from water in the middle of a high grass patch. Here he and Beregi came, and he asked his sergeant if he could explain why the former resident magistrate had chosen such a death-trap of a position. Gazing round, Beregi shook his head, and then summed up the whole situation thus, "He must have been mad, even unto death."

Now that the main range lay behind, and we had practically a whole day in which to rest, I remembered being struck by the absence of stone on the highest ridges, and the extreme narrowness of their root-strewn, moss-carpeted crests. How also, as we approached the higher altitudes, lichen and moss gradually enveloped the timber until they covered limbs and leaves alike, but what impressed me most was the serene calm that

reigned over all, for I heard no crash of fierce or fearful animal, no sound of human voice, no song of radiant bird in all that kingdom of mist and sunshine, of sparkling dew-gems, and immemorial silence.

That night we sat in the moonlight and watched the white mists roll up out of the depths below until they covered the range, and only the ragged peaks stood out like islands above a flood that eddied and flowed about the edge of our lonely eerie.

Next morning, on the 1st November, at 7.30 a.m., our two parties were drawn up ready to move off. Our old escort presented arms, and so I parted with that good soldier, Sergeant Beregi, Oya the magnificent, Dambia, Ogi of pig fame, and the rest, one and all smart men, fit to go anywhere, and well led to do anything.

With them our 130 carriers returned. Men who, carrying single loads of 35 lb., and double ones of from 50 to 70 lb. over torrents spanned by single logs and swaying vine bridges, up and down innumerable and practically pathless hills and ravines, culminating in crossing the main range at nearly 9,000 feet, had taught us a lesson in human endurance never to be forgotten.

For a moment we stood there, each reluctant to go our various ways, for if the world be small where tracks are beaten with the feet of commerce, it is large and lonely in untrodden wilds. Then

we clasped Monckton's hand, and up into the heart of the hills he marched with his face set to a two months' tramp over unknown and possibly hostile country, there to bear alone the white man's burden—and, starting on the last phase of our march, down the steep descent we plunged, Bruce, our new leader, towering 6 feet 4 inches, in front—leaving Kagi to the silence and the mists.





A STRANGE SEPULCHRE.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE LAST STAGE OF OUR MARCH.

We begin the Last Phase—A Strange Sepulchre—Our Mid-day Halt—A Thoughtful Leader—Our Camp—Race Suicide—Moral and Dignified—Wearing the Breeches—A Fascinating Study—A Haunting Song—A Papuan Valhalla—Burial Customs—Sugar Cane—Our First Level Track—Our First Mail—Two go Sick—"I've got it Beat"—The Opie—Iorobaiva—Anthony—Bruce wants to go on—Women Carriers—A Tropical Storm—What Malaria can do—Pride of Race—The Last Hill but One—A Hornet's Nest—The Overland Mail—Iruta Puna—Strange Customs—George's Blandishments fail—Making Fire—George makes a Damper—Pipes and how they are Smoked—A Land of Plenty—The Last Mountain Village—Good Old Harris—Sogeri.

ALTERNATELY rising and falling, we at last reached a plateau, and looking back saw the crests of Mount Victoria towering above the clouds, with a peak to the right that marked our march, and still further the dark outline of the Gap. In front was a deserted native hut, and close by, in a grove of pandanus palms, a strange sepulchre; the body being encased in a sort of barrel made of rude staves and bound with cane, and fixed in an upright position on four poles. And there we left it in its grove, with the great fronds meeting overhead. Then down once more, with villages showing on the opposite slopes, again up a sheer bank, and through a garden, followed by a 2,000 feet climb, when after the usual steep drop we found ourselves in a beautiful spot where, beside a stream bright with rich blossoms and radiant butterflies, we halted.

Out of this the ascent was sharp, and then we moved along a gradual fall ; and Bruce and I having waited to finish our pipes, getting caught in the rain, took shelter in a native house, or rather under the platform of one, where we were entertained by the village fathers. The rain lightening, we literally slid down a greasy hill, to find everyone snug in a dry camp, for Bruce, taking no chances, always sent on a fly pitching party at the mid-day halt, so that even if the rain caught us we knew our tents would be up.

From Serigina we had been in the zone of mountain villages and gardens, and the one we were now camped in was set high on a slope, with mist-hung hills in front full of ever-changing effects—here lovely tree-ferns grew, some I should say seventy feet high, straight and slim, and crowned with tufts of feathery fronds.

These mountaineers, both men and women, are of glorious physique, but unfortunately for Papua are on the decrease, as each year the girls show less inclination for marriage, preferring the freer single life to the drudgery of growing and cooking a husband's food. Possibly also the fact that the girl knows that she will only be one of several wives, neglected in inverse ratio to her seniority, has something to do with this growing distaste for wedded bliss—and both these reasons are understandable and reasonable, if, from a race point of view, to be regretted. But in other parts of



Papua population is on the decline, because married women use primitive but effective methods to avoid giving birth to children; and this a magistrate of long experience told me was on the increase. So after all race-suicide is not wholly peculiar to white peoples. These mountaineers are, however, I was told, a moral—and they certainly are a dignified—people; while on the Venapi River, at the foot of Mount Victoria, even a finer type is found, both men and women being of perfect symmetry. There, I believe, the women wear no ramis, while all the men from Kagi on, unlike those on the other side of the range, use short ones, in place of the breech string. I was told that in the case of one tribe, somewhere in the south-east, the men wear women's ramis, the women men's breech clouts, in memory of a long dead day when the warriors ran away and left their wives to save the situation, and establish an unanswerable claim "to wear the breeches" for all time.

Taking them all in all these hill men and women were the finest we saw in Papua, the mountain land, as ever, giving the noblest race. Indeed, one of the most interesting studies in this fascinating island is that of its many tribes, often distinct in physical type, language, occupation, customs, dress, weapons, and character.

At night they sang us a haunting song, in part recitative, in part waltz time, and at 6.45 we left

Maneri, and dropping down crossed a stream to face a 2,000 feet climb, but here a track was cut, and some attempt had been made to grade it. Half way up we got a view of the hill-tribes' Valhalla, Mount Victoria, and saw the mists rising above "the gardens of the ghosts," to use the poetic imagery of these people. They hold the belief that the spirits of their dead dwell in the great mountain, and that the rolling mist is smoke caused by the ghosts burning trees in preparing their gardens up on the ragged slopes and faces of the ravine-scarred range.

Halting at Kurogaru we saw a grave covered with sticks (to keep off the pigs) set just beside a house. Others, again, bury their dead right under their huts, but Government has forbidden a continuance of this custom on sanitary grounds. Other mountain tribes keep the body in the house, smoking it, while the nearest relations watch by the bier day and night for three months, singing the while in mournful chants the dead man's life story. Then the mummy is taken into the forest and put on a platform. A feast is held in the village, from which they all march with torches to the place of death, put some of the food beside the corpse, cast away their torches, and saying: "We have done all we could for you, so harm us not," leave their dead in the silence of the trees. These people have a supreme respect for the dead, a fact well illustrated by the following story:—



A NATIVE GRAVE.



An old white man and his two sons had dwelt in the hills for some time when, during the absence of the elder boy, the father died, and was buried by the younger. On the other son's return he heartlessly remarked that he regretted being too late, as he would have liked to boil the old man's head. This coming to the ears of a well-known fighting chief, he became so enraged at the insult to the dead that he sent a message to the son, giving him a certain time in which to leave the district, and warning him that if ever he returned he would pay for his visit with his life.

Climbing another hill we gradually dropped, and passing through some gardens, halted at Wamaia, where we saw young sugar-cane twelve feet high, six inches in circumference, and as sweet as treacle.

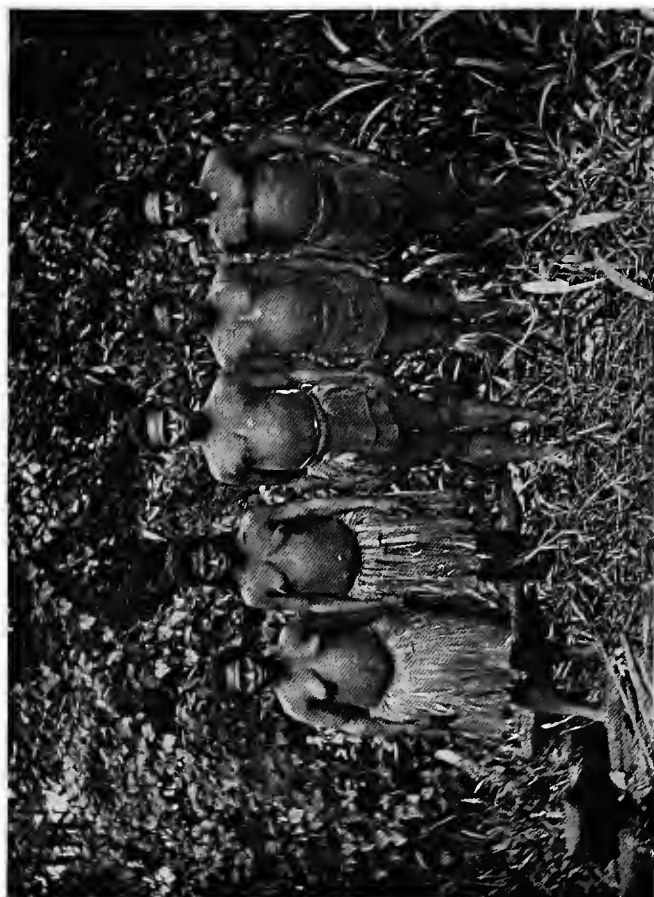
Still descending, we caught the full beauty of the foliage on the farther hills. Then for the first time since leaving Kokoda we marched along a level forest track for six miles, crossing two affluents of the Brown and many smaller streams, and at two o'clock went into camp at the entrance to a gorge. Here, thanks to the courtesy of Mr. Musgrave, we got our first mail from Australia since leaving Samarai, a special messenger from Port Moresby meeting us, and only those who have buried themselves from kith and kin in the mountain fastnesses of a practically unknown land can realise the anxiety opening that post meant, or the relief it was to learn that all was well

when it was written, even though it was a month old.

George, who had been off colour for some days, here went down with fever, while Bruce, after a manful fight, had to take to his hammock suffering agony from cramp. In the morning Bruce was somewhat better, but George, who had taken thirty grains of quinine over night, and twenty more at daybreak, was so weak that it was proposed to leave him his fly standing, and a couple of police and carriers, so that he could come on when strong enough, but the plucky fellow would not hear of it. So at 6.45 we tackled a brute of a hill, and while resting on top up came George, two men pulling and two shoving. Sinking on a log he mopped his forehead and gasped, "I've got it beat, Colonel, I've got it beat!" As he put it, he was "sweating it out," and from then on got steadily better.

Starting again we gradually dropped into a pretty creek, then rising, followed the ridge through bamboo groves and deserted gardens, descending by a fairly easy native road into the Opie River, with pretty villages nestling on the hills. From here we rose to the village of Iorobaiva, the climb taking three-quarters-of-an-hour, although it was cleared and graded after a fashion. Half-way up Bruce halted, the perspiration literally dropping off him, and seeing he was in great pain, Herbert and I pushed on to the





CARRIERS, KAGI DISTRICT.



village and got hot water and a bed ready for him in a native-built Government hut. As it was raining I ordered camp to be pitched, although it was only 11 o'clock, as I dared not risk letting two sick men go on. Anthony, Bruce's warrant officer, saw to everything. He was a lightly built smart Maltese with most beautiful teeth, and first came to Papua as valet to Sir Peter Scratchley. He had since done most things, and wandered alone over many untrodden paths. Knowing a number of dialects and understanding native characteristics, he told me he had no fear of penetrating among tribes untouched by civilization. By Bruce's direction he had cut the tracks and graded some of the worst parts from Maneri with local native labour, in a way that said much both for his ingenuity and their adaptability to new conditions.

When Bruce came in, hot fomentations after a while eased his agony, and like the plucky soldier he was, he offered to go on, but we would not hear of it. The camp stood on a summit surrounded by wooded ranges, and across the valley at our rear a lovely little village stood on a small plateau flanked by rich foliage and backed by a mist-crowned peak. In our front Mount Lawes rose, and in the dim distance lay the hills about Port Moresby.

A number of our porters were now women, who not only carried huge packs on their backs held in

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position by a band passed across the forehead, but often in addition a baby in a net sleeping on top of their burdens. The way these women sailed past me up some of the heart-breaking hills would have humiliated a pedestrian, but as I laid no claim to the title, their performance just filled me with admiration and a little pardonable envy. As I saw little toddlers being taught to "shin" up the ranges ahead of their mothers I ceased to wonder that these mountaineers, men and women alike, are such superb climbers.

That afternoon I stood on the edge of the plateau. Below me tall tree-crests drooped over the thatched roofs of native houses rising in fruitful gardens. In the middle-distance rose a hill, its steep slopes radiant in green foliage, a plantain grove on its topmost face. Beyond great dark ranges spread on either flank, while in the far front hill upon hill faded into the dim horizon. Over all the earth rolled billows of clouds, out of the sky deep tones of thunder fell, and sweeping up from the sea came white skirmishers of mist, with rain and storm following close behind. Swiftly it came, and striking a lordly peak filled all the depths with whirling vapour, and then heaven's floodgates opened with a crash. Fierce spears of fire shot down into the valleys—and the storm was upon us.

That night over a pipe Bruce told us it was at this village Judge Murray had to give up when on

his way to Kokoda from Port Moresby. It appears that, though sickening for fever before starting, he insisted on going, with the natural result that the exertion after Sogeri brought it out, culminating in a breakdown at Iorobaiva. From there Bruce brought him back to Sogeri, the Judge walking—or to be more accurate, crawling—every inch of the way, though Bruce begged him to use a litter wherever practicable. He reached Port Moresby a physical wreck, and when one remembers that he was a man in the prime of life, and one of the foremost athletes of his time, what malaria can do is all the more easily understood. When I saw him two years later, though mentally as strong as ever, and physically fit for his arduous work, he yet bore about with him the aftermath of that first under-rated attack.

I verily believe most men in Papua would sooner die than be carried by the natives, preferring, so long as their legs are not broken, to struggle on, no matter how weak and ill they may be. It seems a point of honour with them never to endanger white prestige by accepting help from natives that carries with it the admission of being overpowered by physical weakness. Fortunately we were not put to the test in this matter; still I cannot help thinking men sometimes may and do carry this pride of race to reckless and unnecessary extremes.

Rising at 4.50, we saw the wondrous red light

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flushing the ranges, while in front the mists floated up the faces of the hills. At 6.30 we started, and passing up among the sugar-cane, Victoria stood in all its embattled majesty. Then descending to a stream, a fair valley opened out. Marching up a water-course, and crossing rill after rill, we walked beneath gracious avenues of shade until we reached the foot of the last big hill save one, and almost an hour of solid climb saw us at its top, and my leg giving me a bad time. Here Herbert, who was waiting, innocently suggested that I should sit for my photograph, and I fear my language was both earnest and unwarranted.

A drop of fifty minutes, during which we nearly roused a nest of hornets about our ears (and that means chaos among carriers), brought us to a halt beside a crystal creek. Here a native passed us bearing a mail from Port Moresby to Buna Bay, or rather he would carry it to the next village, where another man would repeat the performance. So by uncertain stages it would go over the mountains and on down the level lands until in the fulness of time the letters would reach their destinations, always supposing some post boy did not grow weary, or get killed and eaten. Official mails are, however, always carried by two police, who do the whole journey to and from Kokoda in marvellous time, travelling both day and night.

After a rest we walked for an hour up and down a broad track cleared by Anthony's natives, .....





THE OFFICIAL OVERLAND MAIL.

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crossed the Egofi, the main tributary of the Goldie, and went into camp at the picturesque village of Iruta Puna, which is built on its bank, and is surrounded by bold, richly-wooded peaks and ranges. Here they cover the faces of newly-born babes so that their grandparents may not see them for a fixed period, on the expiration of which, the net is removed amid great rejoicings. In other places, after their dead become skeletons, they paint the bones just as the man was painted during life, and always hold the remains in high reverence.

George, who was in great form, tried to induce the women to dance, and by way of encouragement did a few steps of an entirely new and agile character towards where a number of them were sitting. But they just got up and went away. George explained that they were in mourning, and pointed to certain faces smeared black as proof that grief, not want of fascination on his part, was the cause of failure, and, of course, we had to accept his explanation.

Here they "make fire" by passing a length of cane under a partly split piece of soft stick (the cleft being held open by a pebble), and draw it quickly up and down where the wood rests on some dry mulberry leaves. In response to the friction, smoke begins to rise in three or four minutes.

George also baked a damper in native fashion.

First a hole already dug was covered over with wood, which in turn was piled up with stones, and then set alight. When it was burnt the natives lifted most of the hot stones out of the hole by means of cleft sticks. This they then filled with plantain leaves, and on them the damper was placed, covered with a dish. Over it the hot stones were packed, they being covered with green leaves, and then the whole was encased with earth. Twenty minutes later the damper was dug out baked to a turn.

After supper carriers kept coming, as had been their habit all the way from Buna Bay, to beg for paper in which to roll their tobacco. Sometimes they smoke this in cigarette fashion, but generally out of a bamboo pipe. This consists of a single section, the joint being left at one end, and near this a small hole is bored through the stem. Placing the paper cigarette in this hole the native draws till the stem is full of smoke, and filling his own mouth, removes the cigarette and hands the pipe to his neighbour, who in turn passes it on till all the smoke is exhausted, and three or four are inhaling most villainously strong, black, trade-tobacco into their lungs. The pipe is then returned, the cigarette replaced, and the whole process repeated. Men travelling in Papua should always carry a supply of old magazines and papers to meet this demand, as it is a cheap and effective way of pleasing both police and carriers.





RESTING NEAR IRUTA PUNA.

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We found this land from Kagi one of beauty and great richness, which some day must give of its plenty to the World. Here we ate lovely bananas and luscious pine-apples, the latter fruit growing at Mount Knutsford at an altitude of as much as 5,000 feet. At Rigo just above sea level they are huge, some being 17 inches long by  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter.

At 6.35 we bade farewell to the final real mountain village, and tramping over range and valley came to the last big hill, and from its top saw in the far distance the last of the Gap and all the mystic mountain land. Still rising and falling, passing over shrunken streams and through foliage less deep and rich, we came on good old Harris, laden with letters and full of hearty welcome, and as we clasped hands he told us that Okeden was well—so all was well.

Topping our last rise we looked down on the plantations of Sogeri clinging to the opposite slopes. Then down the decline we went, through the village of Sogeri, past a line of native chiefs, and walking in great form reached camp, and the end of our march, at 10.40 on the morning of November 5th, 1906.

## CHAPTER XI.

### REFLECTIONS AND COFFEE.

We Shake Hands on it—In Search of Gold—We Burn our Boats—Our Condition—What the March Proved—Feather Weights—Paying Fealty—A Future Policy—A Time that is Past—Dreams—The Transition Stage—A Possibility—Shirted Chiefs—Horses at Last—Mr. Ballantine's Plantation—Local Coffee—Mr. Greene—A Seeker after Health—A Seeker after Knowledge—Go and do Likewise—The Plantation—What a Hundred Acres of Coffee Costs—The Soil—What Sogeri Produces—We Leave Sogeri—A Vision Splendid—The Rouna Falls—The Copper Mine—Experts from Cooktown—Warirata—We Reach the other Sea—Re-united.

HERBERT and I shook hands on it, for our task was practically accomplished, a ride of thirty-five miles to Port Moresby being all that stood between us and the completion of a direct and continuous march from sea to sea.

Monckton and Bruce said that we would be the first outsiders to do it, and that they were the only Government officers who had it to their credit, although Captain Barton and a very few other officials had crossed the main range to Kokoda, or reached that station from Buna Bay. Doubtless some of the diggers, who, in the early days of the Yodda and other mines, wandered from Port Moresby over the then unknown mountains to these fields, did eventually reach the opposite coast after taking risks and enduring hardships unrecorded and unsung—but none the less heroic. Still their journeys, though performed

under far worse conditions than ours, were broken for long periods on the various "rushes."

In sending the *Merrie England* back to Port Moresby we burnt our boats, for it would have been worse than useless to return to a malarial bed such as Buna Bay, had any of the party gone down with fever, for even Messrs. Whitten's monthly steamer was laid up at Samarai. While, once we left Kokoda, to have turned in our tracks would have been about as impracticable as to go on, for a man absolutely too weak to walk could never have been carried up and down many of the ravines and ranges we met, with any reasonable hope of pulling through.

Starting both out of condition, the pace was of necessity never forced, though after a day or so, and from then on, Herbert could have easily walked with the best of them. Handicapped by a weak leg, and never by way of being a pedestrian, I was the lame duck of the convoy.

Our march showed us the rich possibilities of the country from Buna Bay to Kokoda, and from Kagi to Sogeri; taught us the disabilities under which digging, and developmental prospecting is at present carried on; the potentialities of the northern and mountain tribes; the enormous difficulties of transport over the main range; the arduous nature of operations undertaken to punish recalcitrant tribes; and finally proved that in this maligned climate it is possible for unseasoned

men, starting in no sense in the pink of walking form, to get across Papua (the main range thrown in) without contracting a symptom of malarial fever or any other disease. It is true that both Monckton and George had attacks, but they were recurrences brought out by exertion, and so could not be debited against this trip. So all things considered, our march of twenty-two days, on twenty of which rain fell, and which included practically five days at Kokoda and the Yodda, was, I consider, amply justified.

We got weighed at Sogeri, when I found I was 10 st. 5 lb., having lost a stone since leaving the Yodda and two for my trip, while even Herbert was short of a good deal, a fact which says much for the strenuousness of those days, during the last four of which we crossed eight hills averaging over 4,000 feet above sea level, which meant in each instance 2,000 feet of solid up and down for us, and this at the easy end.

On reaching Sogeri we had seven or eight chiefs in our party, all of whom, I gathered from Bruce, were going with him to Port Moresby, there to visit Captain Barton in token of fealty and friendship, and I believe not only they, but the natives generally, had an honest affection for the Administrator, responding to a sympathetic regard, which he in turn undoubtedly possessed for all the rights and customs pertaining to the brown race.

Any further official policy of development to be either just or successful must continue fully and generously to recognise these, and must firmly insist that settlers of whatever class work along similar lines. At the same time the natives must not be spoilt, and be rendered alike insolent, idle, and both useless and dangerous by being encouraged to assume that all the powers of Government are exerted for the sole aim and object of giving them inter-tribal peace, and unlimited rights to land they cannot develop, and indeed have no use for or just claim to.

The time is past in the history of the world when any people, be they white, black, or brown, can hope to hold for long, undeveloped, and empty acres from the teeming and industrious millions of the over-crowded and rapidly awakening East. A narrow strip of sea, and a single fleet alone guard both Australia and Papua from bloody and absolute absorption to-day, so, for the safety of both, Papua cannot be left in its primal state. The man who thinks otherwise is an impracticable dreamer, while the one who puts one stone in the path of legitimate white settlement for any cause whatever, is an enemy not only to the Empire as a whole, but to all men, the natives included.

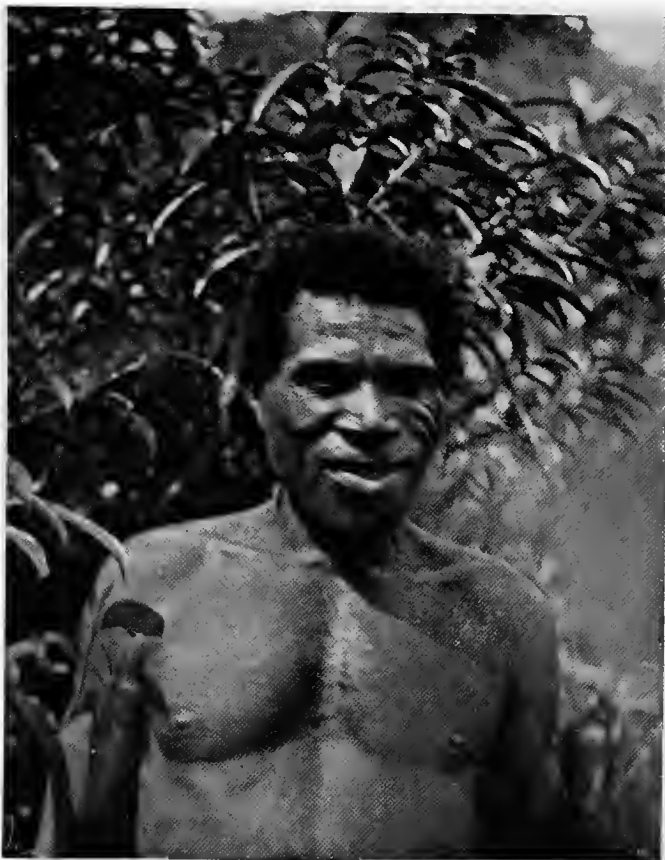
Attempts (admittedly in the main both earnest and honest) to graft civilised ideas on to primal customs, and century-old superstitions, have already sapped barbarian vigour, and awakened

desires that will no longer permit of either a return to old conditions, or a halt at the present milestone. The Papuan must either develop, or sink into gradual but sure mental, moral, and physical extinction. A late report of Captain Barton brings this latter possibility into sinister relief. In it he says "while larger crimes such as murder are on the decrease, the smaller ones, such as theft, etc., are on the increase." In other words, cunning now dictates suppression of those passions, the gratification of which entails heavy punishment, but no moral sense forbids indulgence in spineless sneak-thief vices, for which the penalty is so slight as to be practically non-existent.

I believe the Papuan, in whose veins flows blood over 9,000 years old, has still enough vitality left to flourish side by side with, and to learn from, a more highly developed people, but the teaching must be gradual, practical, and systematic, while firmness, kindness, and scrupulous fairness must be the creed of every white man in his dealings with the native, for with undeveloped intelligences an ounce of practice is worth a ton of precept. On the other hand, Government, whenever possible must see to it that want brought on by idleness, is only relieved by hard work, and that every white man who has earned it, gets his full measure of respect from every brown one.

All the chiefs who joined us from Kagi onwards were arrayed in more or less dirty shirts, while in





GODOI, CHIEF OF THE BARURI TRIBE.

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one or two cases a depraved slouch or battered hard hat was added to this ridiculous costume. They reminded me strongly, if sadly, save in physique, of the degenerate aborigines who haunt "way-back" country towns of Australia, and the pity of it was, and is, that they are hugely proud, and wickedly fond of, these cheap, and dirty garments. So marked is this strange infatuation that nothing will induce them to take one off. If fortunate enough to obtain others they place these in turn over the original gift. We had the greatest difficulty in inducing one fellow to "peel" for a photograph, and when after a physical as well as mental struggle he did, the state of the first—or rather last—shirt would have taken a Zola to describe. Admitting that these chiefs are only shadowy figure-heads, seldom (thanks to the almost universal communal system) wielding influence that extends beyond their own relations, anything outside of this being strictly of a personal nature, still it seems a pity to make their robe of office alike health destroying, and ludicrous. I was told that it was Sir William McGregor's idea, which made me, while marvelling, still hesitate to criticise, and yet when I saw the chieftains standing in line at Sogeri I sought in vain for a reason, save a humorous one, strong enough to warrant the presentation of those insanitary, and awful shirts.

At Sogeri horses were waiting us, including

“Rigo,” and no returning Arab ever rejoiced more over his “desert darling” than I on once again throwing a leg across my old ear-kicking mount.

In the afternoon we rode (Oh blessed word !) up to Mr. Ballantine’s coffee plantation, which is most picturesquely placed on the slope and crown of a ridge with a wonderful view from the trim little bungalow stretching away down the valley, backed by lofty peaks, and cloud-capped ranges. Helped by good soil, and an admirable situation, this plantation must grow in value every year, a result which its owner thoroughly deserves, for he has, though a busy official, kept it going by paying others to manage for him, and has the reputation of never having used his position to obtain native labour to the detriment either of private, or Government interests.

Here we tasted locally grown coffee, excellent alike as regards taste, strength, and aroma.

Riding up and down a graded and well-made road constructed by natives under the supervision of Mr. Greene, we reached the plantation managed and partly owned by this most industrious and intelligent colonist. Originally a bank-clerk in Mauritius, he came to Papua (ludicrous as it sounds) in search of health—none the less he found it, for he told me that, save for a little fever when he settled on the Astrolabe (attributed by him to the opening up of virgin soil, though I am not quite clear as to how this fits in with the *anopheles*

theory) he had been fitter and stronger than during any other period of his life.

Apparently without possessing any special expert knowledge with regard to coffee-growing, he read up the question intelligently and throwing abundant industry into his practice, has succeeded in transforming "a white elephant" into a continually increasing asset. To quote the Royal Commissioners' report,—“The area at present consists of 129 acres of which 55 are under coffee. This has been planted for three-and-a-half years, and the present crop of from nine to ten tons is estimated to realise about £600, while the total outlay up to date has been about £900. Mr. Greene is also growing rubber successfully.”

What Mr. Greene (originally handicapped by a weak constitution and want of special training) has accomplished should be well within the scope of any healthy, intelligent, and industrious young man with small capital, but ample patience and tenacity of purpose, who is prepared to make his plantation his life-work for a few years. Nor do I know a more beautiful, healthy, and convenient (it is only thirty-five miles from Port Moresby) spot in the whole of Papua for him to make a start than at or near Sogeri, 1,800 feet above sea level and with infinite possibilities of expansion right back to Kagi.

Reaching the plantation we rode up a path lined on each side with magnificent pine-apples until we halted in front of a charming if small bungalow,

with walls of matting, roof of grass, floors of palm-slabs, and circled and shaded by a broad verandah, the whole built on piles and raised some feet above the ground. Behind it great clumps of bamboo cast long shadows, which on each side from trellises, granadilla vines hung green and fruitful. In front and all around coffee trees flourished, while paw paws, mangoes, and purple-leaved plants rose from amid fair flowers, and beyond them all a valley stretched into the dim distance. A few years ago this planter's paradise was virgin bush!

The extract below, taken from the report of the Royal Commission, may prove interesting to intending settlers.

The following estimate of the cost of planting 100 acres of coffee in this part of Papua may be taken as substantially correct, the figures having been carefully checked by a man who is himself the only successful planter in the whole of Papua:—

*Estimate of Cost of Coffee Planting in Papua.*

100 Acres. Bushes planted 8 feet by 8 feet.

	£	s.	d.
1. Nursery expenses, seed, etc. ...	10	0	0
2. Felling, clearing, and holing (8 feet by 8 feet) at £1 per acre (including pegs for lining) ... ..	100	0	0
3. Lining ... ..	10	0	0
4. Planting out ... ..	50	0	0
5. Tools ... ..	15	0	0
6. House for owner or superintendent	50	0	0
7. Huts for boys ... ..	30	0	0
8. *Machinery—Pulper, 30 or 40 tons £26			
Pulping house ... ..	15		
Three boxes for fermenting,			
One box for washing	10		
	—	51	0 0

\* Would not be required until trees were in bearing.

	£	s.	d.
9. *Drying shed £20, Trays (40) £25...	45	0	0
10. Contingencies ... ..	50	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£411	0	0
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\* Would not be required until trees were in bearing.

*Annual Cost.*

	£	s.	d.
Interest, 6 per cent. on £411 ... ..	24	13	3
Survey fees ... ..		<i>nil.</i>	
† Rent of land for first ten years ...		<i>nil.</i>	
Recruiting 40 boys at £4—£160 every three years ... ..	53	6	8
Labour, 40 boys at £3 per annum ...	120	0	0
Supervision ... ..	250	0	0
	<hr/>		
Total cost per annum ... ..	£447	19	11
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or excluding supervision ... ..	£197	19	11

† Rent—First ten years ...	<i>Nil.</i>
Second ten years ...	Not more than 6d. per acre.
Afterwards ...	5 per cent. of unimproved value, to be appraised every 20 years.

Coffee requires friable, well-drained soil, on the side of a hill for preference. At Sogeri, 1,600 feet above sea level, the soil is a rich volcanic chocolate, and the country very similar to the Tweed River in New South Wales. On it we saw growing, coffee, rubber, peaches, cinnamon, granadillas, loquats, vanilla, pepper, mandarines, tobacco, pine-apples, paw paws, saffron, ginger, bananas, citrons, tomatoes, and the usual native foods.

Mounting, Bruce, Herbert, Harris, George and I rode away from Sogeri at six on November 7th, leaving the carriers to follow, and when later I saw

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them passing into Port Moresby, quite a number of the men who had carried their loads without apparent discomfort up and down the ranges between Kagi and Sogeri were visibly distressed and limping. The difficulties of the road from Sogeri on were in no way responsible, for it was both easier and better made, a drier climate and stonier surface being the sole causes of their partial break-down, for even Papuan carriers cannot for long bear heavy burdens over hard roads on bare feet.

After riding for some miles through easy country we ran into gum ridges that suggested alike Australia and good stock land. Then passing stunted palms, dropped into the Laloki River, a broad, shallow, and picturesque stream. For a while Australia and Papua alternated in stretches of open forest and tropical belts, then from the vantage ground of a village we saw a vision splendid. In our front a great chasm, the river boiling in its depths. To the right a wall of rock-faced cliffs. On our left rich volcanic hills grassed to their tree-crowned summits and embossed with huge boulders of conglomerate. In the middle-distance Mount Lawes rising barren and alone, and stretching to the shadowy outlines of the coast hills a fertile campagna, a streak of deep foliage marking the winding course of the Laloki as it flowed down its centre to the Coral Sea. Then we rode by mountain paths till we came to the



Rouna Falls. Here the river plunged suddenly in a sheer 300 feet of white foam to the depths below, noble in volume, beautiful beyond compare, in its pure stainless contrast to the black walls and green foliage of the dark ravines.

By a track cut high on the sides of the hills, we passed on, the river flowing far below until we came to a copper mine, and off-saddled for lunch. During our absence local shares had jumped, and Bruce, who held a big interest, was jubilant, while the fame of it having been noised abroad, certain experts, including a Captain Minter, had come over from Cooktown to spy out the land, and were at the mine on our arrival. The work done appeared to be of the prospecting order, and the Captain, who I found was the brother of an old back-country friend of mine, told me that no defined lead had as yet been discovered. He further informed me that while looking round he had chanced on a small lake far up on the range, and when I surveyed his stately proportions I realised that he was giving the syndicate who sent him a lot of energy for their money. They were packing the ore for Port Moresby on mules, and, whatever be the fate of this particular mine, I fancy that good finds will yet be struck in this district.

Still, near the Laloki, now calmer and with placid stretches, on we rode until striking away to the left we climbed a hill and saw behind us

the bold broken cliffs and crags of the Astrolabe, with Warirata plantation perched near a summit. Then every mile it grew more barren and drought-stricken, the very trees being leafless, a few wallabies hopping here and there, till after a section of good broad road we topped a rise, and at our feet, glowing and calm, lay the ocean. Passing through a village, radiant with the scarlet bloom of poncianas, we cantered over a flat, up round a bend, and down to where "Hillworth" nestled above Ela Beach, and so completed our march from "sea to sea."

Bidding good-night to Bruce, who had made our journey from Kagi as pleasant and easy as was humanly possible, we once more clasped hands with Okeden, who had hurried from his work in answer to our "coo-ee," and so stood re-united to a colleague and friend who had worked himself almost to a standstill with most important and often most uncongenial labour, while we had been moving through scenes of surpassing grandeur and beauty, and experiences of never flagging interest.





GOVERNMENT STATION, DARU.

## CHAPTER XII.

### POSSIBILITIES OF THE WEST.

Port Moresby Again—A Prehistoric Man—Natural Barriers—Our Work is Done—We Say Farewell—Redscar Bay—Yule Island—The Sacred Heart—Women Papua owes much to—Improved Health Conditions—A Sheep Experiment—A Genial Christian—A Medical A.R.M.—Mount Yule—A River's Mouth—Ermelo—Out of the Dry Belt—Keen Traders—Village Fathers as Teachers—Bramble Cay at Night—Rats for Lunch—Rohu's Experience—First Australian Land—Darnley Island—Daru—Titanic Stone Axes—Curios—A Practical Worker—Pythons *v.* Fowls—At the Gaol—Irrigation—Agriculturists—A Great Lone Land—Class of Country and Soil—Tobacco—Timber and Labour—Portable Saw-mills—The Other Side of the Picture—Agricultural Products—Land and Natives—Climate—A Dream of the Future—The Present—Farewell Papua.

I TAKE it that Port Moresby is the smallest capital in the world, the white population consisting of forty-one men, sixteen women, and twelve children. According to the Chief Government Medical Officer the health of the women is excellent, while children get on very well up to the age of four or five, when, if not sent to a more bracing climate every two or three years, they, as in every tropical country, show a tendency to grow flabby and anæmic. When at Samarai we saw a dear little girl of two, born on the island, and looking the picture of health. Given a hill station at Astrolabe and a good school at Port Moresby, I can see no reason why both adults and children should not live there and enjoy reasonable health all the year round without frequent and expensive trips to Australia.

Captain Hunter told me that while fishing off a small island lying just outside the harbour he saw embedded in a sort of cement just washed by the tide the perfect skeleton of a man. Unfortunately on his return he told of his find, with the result that certain of the inhabitants tried to shift it with dynamite, succeeding so effectually that a most interesting and possibly prehistoric aborigine was lost for ever to science.

While I doubt if a road will ever be constructed over the main range practicable for general traffic, it, on the other hand, must for all time remain an effectual barrier between Port Moresby and hostile invasion from the north-east, while the reef-strewn coast will ever make attack from the sea both difficult and dangerous, for in the inner basin, completely landlocked and only possible of entrance from Port Moresby proper (which is a good harbour of decent depth and reasonable scope for jetty buildings), destroyers could crouch in safety and unseen, ready to dash out and into a hostile fleet. So if in the fulness of time the capital develops in proportion to the richness of the country, it is well situated by reason of its harbour to accommodate the needs of commerce and, thanks to its natural advantages, to resist foreign occupation.

One evening—our work done—we looked upon the clear cut islands and soft mystic ranges and peaks for the last time. That night the sun set out

beyond the harbour gates glorious in raiment of rose and green and gold, but we said farewell without regret, for on the morrow we sailed for the South land, and love and home.

Bidding good-bye to the faithful George, two or three officials, the corporal who had served me splendidly from Kagi, and our two "boys," we left Port Moresby at 9.15 on the morning of November 23rd. As the *Merrie England* steamed out of the harbour a soft azure light mantled the hills that rise behind Fairfax Harbour. Then as we cleared the bluff beneath whose base Ela lies, we caught a glimpse of "Hillworth" with the mists floating midway on purple hills, while behind rose the blue Astrolabe—and coast-wise all things swam into dim mystic distances of ever-changing tones of colour.

Hugging the shore, which consisted of barren hills, and low-lying country backed by cloud-capped ranges, and passing an occasional lakatoi, we reached Redscar Bay, into which the Rivers Brown, Venapi, Goldie, and Laloki all empty. About this point we dropped the reef, nor did we pick it up again on this coast. About 3.30 Yule Island was sighted, the country, now consisting of low wooded ranges with tree-clad flats by the shore. Here a lakatoi passed, having four square cut ugly canvas sails in place of the graceful pinions of native fibre. So, already, the old order changeth, giving place to the new, and in

a case such as this, I can only say, alas the pity of it !

Dropping anchor off the Government Station at Yule Island we were met on landing by the co-adjutor Bishop, and Father Theodore, both French and charming. They took us up to the Sacred Heart Mission Station where we made the acquaintance of other priests, and later, Archbishop Navarre, a pleasant old gentleman, and a veteran missionary, he having been in Papua twenty-five years. He told me he meant here to await his call—a labourer to the end.

These missionaries (their coast-line being extremely limited) have penetrated about ninety miles inland, constructing at a cost of £900 a horse-road for most of the distance. I understand they did a lot of the labour personally, as is the habit of their order in all things, and that, as a consequence, some of them died, and many suffered severely from fever. This I can quite understand, as I am fully convinced that white men will never be able to perform hard manual work in the open in Papua, save possibly on some of the high altitudes.

They graze a hundred head of cattle and eight horses on the island, and about 200 cattle on the mainland, where they also have a cocoa-nut plantation of over 400 acres, using ploughs drawn by horses, which latter they hope soon to replace by oxen for this class of work. Having plenty of milk



they make butter and cheese, and, as each Father is master of a trade, are all qualified alike to do every class of practical work, or teach it to the natives.

A band of sisters is attached to the Mission as teachers and nurses. For these noble and self-sacrificing women, be they sisters, or lay nurses, or missionaries' wives, in whatever part of Papua, I have naught but unqualified admiration.

Yule Island is undulating, with clumps of trees alternating with stretches of grass land, and when this is green it must be a lovely spot. Once very unhealthy, it is now a fairly healthy station, thanks to clearing away a lot of the mangroves, and owing to the fact that the cattle both eat down the grass, and provide better food for the Mission. The Fathers are experimenting with sheep on the mainland, but while this is an interesting and praiseworthy departure, I personally have small hope of any practical result.

I do not think the Sacred Heart employs island teachers. If not, a great field for teaching the natives English lies in front of young Australian Catholics, always provided that they are eligible for work in this Mission.

After a simple dinner, cooked and served by our hosts, we returned to the ship, where we met Mr. Dancy of the London Missionary Society, who lived on the opposite mainland. He was a fine looking, healthy, genial man, whose nineteen years

in Papua had left no sign, at least outwardly. Unfortunately time would not allow us to accept his hearty invitation to visit his station, so after a pleasant chat he bade us farewell, and we went on with our work.

Dr. Strong, the Assistant Resident Magistrate for the District, was also on board. He is a doctor of medicine, and, were it possible, it would be a splendid thing for both whites and natives if every resident magistrate and assistant resident magistrate had even a sound elementary medical, but especially surgical, knowledge.

Leaving Yule Island, and steaming in sight of a wooded but uninteresting coast-line, we passed a range broken into great clefts, and fang-like peaks, having for a culminating point and centre Mount Yule, shooting its lonely head into the sky 10,040 feet above sea level. Hundreds of white fleecy clouds floated quiescent along the whole dark blue front of this chain, resting above, behind, and about its sharp cut crests. All the coast was now broken, in one spot a column of mist defining the existence of a river's mouth. Still bearing across the Gulf of Papua we almost lost sight of land, till at four we ran into a bay with a bar in shore, and anchored about four miles off Ermelo Station. Here cocoa-nuts grew in profusion, this country being out of the dry belt. The coast-land is low-lying, backed by ranges 4,000 feet high, but beyond a Govern-

ment, and London Missionary Society Station; white population—save for an odd trader—is non-existent.

The natives are of good physique, possessing slightly Jewish features and keen trading instincts, and they soon swarmed about the ship in canoes, trying to sell us dancing masks, and prettily dyed ramis.

The Resident Magistrate, Mr. Griffin, a retired officer of artillery, who won his D.S.O. for good work in South Africa, told us that they not only build great dobus (or houses) holding from 200 to 300 men, but that it is their custom to place young male children in certain of these, where they grow to manhood under the care and supervision of the elders of the village, who instruct them in all manly and warlike exercises, point out the dangers of immorality, both from a personal, but more particularly a tribal standpoint, and generally inculcate a high standard of living, based on the duty each individual owes to his State here represented by his particular village. Griffin added that this custom was on the decline. It is regrettable that it cannot be re-awakened and fostered on broader and, in certain matters, more industrial lines.

Leaving at eight in the morning, we found ourselves in calm water out of sight of land, and at mid-day anchored about a mile off Bramble Cay, a small sandy atol a quarter of a mile long, and

from 200 to 300 yards across, its centre—which is a guano deposit—being carpeted with a sort of spinach plant. A cluster of rocks near were covered by sea-gulls, boobies, and other smaller birds, while hundreds flew about our heads when we landed. The atol was strewn with coal, a ship laden with 2,000 tons having been wrecked on a reef close by, and some “boys” we were taking to Daru to be paid off, and an odd murderer or so going to the same place “to do time,” amused themselves by throwing it, and sticks, at the birds, which were very tame. Having brought down a few, and caught some rats, they singed them and ate the lot practically raw.

A bird-catcher named Rohu had a somewhat grim experience here. Left with enough provisions to last a month, and depending for water on a depression partly full, he one day, in trying to clean it out, poked a hole in the rotten bottom and lost his supply. Being a man of resource, he fixed up a condenser with his pint, and just managed to hold out until the *Merrie England* chancing that way saw his signal and took him off, but it was a close call. This was the first Australian land we touched, for it belongs to Queensland, and possesses a beacon erected by the Government of that State.

Rowing back, we ran into three or four large turtles at play, and saw a fine sunset with Darnley Island rising out of the sea thirty miles away.



PAYING OFF "BOYS," DARU.



There many divers have perished through going too deep for pearls, which are very fine off this island. Once the Daru pearling fleet used to coal at Bramble Cay, but that is now a tale that is told, the grounds being worked out.

At eight we went ashore again to catch turtles, but without success, they being too shy or too smart for us. Still, it was cool and beautiful in the moonlight, with the white sand, and dark sea in contrast, and a little weird as well, for we were alone on the waters, save for the lights from our vessel shining out of the night.

At 6.30 the following morning we sighted a flat coast-line, and about 7.30 anchored off Daru, a low-set island facing a shore of mangroves and taller trees, unrelieved by any backing of hills.

Rowing over acres of mud, we landed near the Customs House, and a couple of stores, and, walking by well-kept, shell-paved paths through a space of cleared ground, reached a higher slope, on which stood the gaol, resident magistrate's house, and, further on, the London Missionary Society's Station, everything being very park-like, and made beautiful by glorious crotons, clumps of palms, oleanders in bloom, and other flowers; the whole fenced about by primal forest (in parts where the underbush was cleared), somewhat suggestive of our own bush.

On either side of the steps leading up to the resident magistrate's bungalow a row of stone-

axes stood, edge up. Some must have been over fourteen inches long, and all were beautifully made. Mr. Jiear told me he got them on the beaches of the Fly River, and later, when I asked a store-keeper and trader if he had seen any, he replied that he had a lot in his boat as ballast. If so, a race physically more powerful, and infinitely more numerous than that of to-day, must have lived on the banks of the great river.

Mr. Jiear showed us a head-dress made of white feathers, which, when on, would reach to an ordinary man's heels, and was in shape exactly like some worn by the North American Indians. He told me that during one of his inland trips he had been given certain privileges of brotherhood by one of the tribes, which admitted him to their councils, and gave him the right to claim their help and protection, and that this head-dress was worn by initiates at their ceremonies. If I properly understood him, then certain of the Western tribes hold at least one important rite in common with the red man. His house was full of artistically marked arrows and other interesting curios; but, after Mrs. Jiear had given us a dainty lunch on a broad, cool verandah, we had to leave them, being due at the London Missionary Society's Station. Here everything was in splendid order, and we found Mr. Riley to be a practical enthusiast, who believed in teaching the natives how to make the best use of their



agricultural opportunities, and who had no time for lazy converts. The school, however, was what interested me most, and more than ever confirmed me in the belief that the Papuan can and will master English if given a fair chance, and an enthusiastic and capable teacher. Both these essentials are combined in Mrs. Riley, a Nowra girl by the way, and one of the healthiest, brightest women I met in Papua. The teaching during school hours was purely secular, and eminently practical and useful, with, I should say, most satisfactory results as regards both boys and girls. Several of the latter were, as well, excellent needlewomen, and one girl was working with the objective of buying a sewing-machine for herself; while one boy at least—a brainy-looking little fellow—would have held his own anywhere, and Mr. Riley told me he was constantly being critically questioned by his pupils after telling some of the Bible stories. As an instance, having given his class an account of how Noah took two of each type of bird, animal, and insect into the Ark, and so preserved the various species, a boy next day came to him and asked, “Did Noah take two of each sort?” “Yes,” replied Riley. “Two fowls?” “Yes.” “Two pythons?” “Yes.” “No fear,” said the boy. “But why?” “Why,” laughed the boy, “because if Noah had put two pythons in the same Ark as those fowls, there wouldn’t be any

fowls now." Which reminds me of the story of the bewildered savage on the south-east coast, who, on being asked how he was getting on spiritually, shook his head, and in the bitterness of his soul cried, "Before missionary come me have plenty debil, then Dr. Lawes come, he fetch noder debil, then Dr. Bromilow him bring noder, then Bishop Stoney Wigg him come along with anoder, now me got three new debils to dodge as well as old ones."

At the gaol we saw vats full of native sago, solid, pasty, sour-smelling stuff, but appreciated by the prisoners. Of these, all the Kiwais we saw, both men and women, had a distinctly Jewish type of features, and were strongly built. Jiear told us adultery was a crime on the increase, nor is the reason difficult to find. Until Government stepped in and abolished club law, this moral lapse meant death or nearly as bad at the hands of the injured husband. Now at worst it only results in a short stay in durance of the most free and easy order, with good and regular meals thrown in. The Western tribes have the reputation of being not only sensual, but inclined to the practice of unnatural crimes, but Jiear said that his experience did not warrant him in coming to the latter conclusion, at any rate to the extent of regarding it as a race vice.

They are physically a fine people, and should make good soldiers. By occupation agriculturists,

they grow, besides cocoa-nuts, plantains, and the ordinary native foods, tobacco, and irrigate their gardens on the Fly by means of the rise of the tide. As their methods appear to be in advance of those adopted by most of the other tribes, it seems reasonable to hope that some day they will not only profit by white example, but will also take kindly to working on European plantations.

The West is to-day a great lone land, vast areas of which no white man's eyes have seen. But enough is known to forecast for it a future of great agricultural, pastoral, and industrial prosperity.

Mr. Bruce, who in twenty-five years had never been further south than Thursday Island, save for one year in the old country, and who looked hard, and fit enough to face another quarter of a century, told the Commission that he had been 350 miles up the Fly, the first sixty miles being mangrove, the next twenty nipa palms, after that open forest, then forest and grass land. Eighty miles up the river he went inland for about one hundred miles, and found rich open forest country, well grassed. It was generally very flat for about twenty miles from the river, with then a rise of thirty to forty feet above the plain, followed by timber country. Ninety miles from the mouth he measured the depth of the bank, and found it to be seventeen feet six inches of black loam down to the clay, and he expressed the opinion that this

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character of soil obtained for the whole 350 miles of his voyage.

He had shipped tobacco leaf preserved by the natives to manufacturers in various parts of the world, who informed him that it was first class tobacco (but badly cured) and most suitable for the manufacture of cigars.

Speaking as a man with a certain knowledge alike of timber and vessels, he considered that the possibilities ahead of this industry on the Fly and other Western rivers were great. In his opinion a steamer of 500 tons shallow draft could get up the Fly from 300 to 400 miles, and for 300 miles there was any amount of splendid hardwood, with enough native labour to do the hauling and cutting cheaply, but that at any rate in the west there should be no trouble in this connection either as to supply, or cost. For the Fly he advocated portable saw-mills capable of being moved from place to place, as in America, the steamers to go alongside the bank and load. One hardwood mentioned by him being ant-resisting should be invaluable on the Indian railways, while others were excellent cabinet woods, showing beautiful figuring.

The other side of the picture, according to Captain Hunter, is that from the break of the barrier at Redscar Head to Hall Sound, and from thence to Daru, there is no safety save during five months of the year, namely, from the beginning of

November to the beginning of March, and that Hall Sound is the only harbour west of Port Moresby where vessels can lie in security all the year round, though the other anchorages are safe in the north-west season. Further, that the west coast, including the mouth of the Fly, is girdled with long shoals and sand-bars, and that the channels of this river are ever changing— islands disappearing and appearing with marvellous rapidity on its uncertain bosom. Still these, if serious, are not insuperable difficulties, and in my opinion, a practical timber expert should be sent without delay to Papua to report on its timber possibilities.

Among products indigenous to the Fly, manilla hemp, sago, tobacco, and kapok or cotton, grow wild, while the natives cultivate sugar cane, and enormous quantities of bananas. According to Bruce, there should be small difficulty in obtaining land without injustice to the natives, as “that occupied by them is a mere flea-bite,” while Mr. Jiear stated that “generally speaking they are particularly friendly to whites.”

Speaking of the climate, the Resident Magistrate said that “with the exception of ordinary malaria Europeans can live here without getting much disease, but they appear to run down very quickly, and have to go away frequently,” which doubtless refers to, and is true of, the low-lying coast. Bruce, on the other hand, stated, “I would call it

good, when you get away from the mangroves, I say then there is no fever, and very few mosquitoes"; which is also doubtless an honest opinion. Strike an average, and I think the result would be about the climate of the West.

Drained, and nurtured by a mighty river which, fed by streams we would account splendid, pours its waters, born in the womb of mountains on whose crests no white man's feet have ever trod, into the Gulf of Papua, from a mouth seventy miles across; clad in forests that hold untold potentialities; possessed of broad acres that yet may bear vast herds of cattle, and horses numerous enough to mount a host; its rivers fringed with the agricultural plenty of a primitive people; the West may, in the passage of the years, give of its riches to thousands, but not till the World is more crowded, more hungry than it is to-day. Meanwhile, every pioneer of futurity must be treated in no niggardly spirit, but be heartened and encouraged on his lonely and adventurous way by every legitimate means at the disposal of the Government.

The Customs House stood near the edge of the water, and as we drank our last cup of shore-tea with Mrs. Symons and her daughters on the balcony of the Sub-Collector's quarters, the warning siren rang out across the roadstead where the trading luggers rode at anchor. So, parting with our kindly hostess, we were carried through the

mud to our boat, and at 4.50 on November 26th, just when a lovely rainbow spanned the passage from shore to shore as if in farewell, the *Merrie England* got under way, and at last we bade good-bye, and God-speed to Papua.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### A LAST WORD.

THE saying "give a dog a bad name, and you may as well hang him" applies with equal force to countries. Papua is a striking instance in point. Travellers returning from, and often men who have lived long in, a practically unknown land, seldom minimise its dangers and disadvantages. To do so would be more than human. Men again, who are so constituted physically as to be susceptible to malaria in its more malignant form, naturally on their return look back with jaundiced eyes on the scene of their past sufferings and ever-recurring inheritance of pain. Further, the fact that odd missionaries, officials, and traders have been killed and in rare instances eaten, in some instances probably, because they deserved it,—often as a result of their own rashness, not seldom because they have been so unlucky as to reap a legacy of vengeance sown by unscrupulous men of their own race—has in the past helped to supply the colouring for a painting of this daughter of the coral seas, of which the best that can be said is that it is an overdrawn picture, but in no sense a fair or faithful likeness. That men have suffered loss of fortune, health, and life while treading the





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# THE FIRST LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HEAD—The Administrator, Capt. F. R. BARTON.

LEFT—Judge MURRAY (*Chief Judicial Officer*), Mr. MONCKTON (*Resident Magistrate*), Mr. WEEKLEY.

RIGHT—Mr. BALLANTINE (*Treasurer*), Mr. CAMPBELL (*Resident Magistrate*), Mr. WHITTEN, Mr. LITTLE.



paths of official duty, mission enterprise, and private speculation, is true. It is alike true that men die sacrificed on the altar of public duties, martyrs for Christ in city slums, and as a result of private over-work in every country in the Western world. But the vast majority do not, neither do a majority die or indeed become either physical or financial wrecks in Papua.

To compare it with the Commonwealth climatically, socially, or from the standpoint of settlement, as the term is at present understood at any rate in Southern Australia, would be manifestly absurd, but even in this connection it is interesting to recall the fact that Australia faced by the pioneers and their heroic wives was a wilderness unoccupied save by wandering tribes of blacks, often swept by droughts and bush fires, and in no sense so generally healthy as it is to-day; and that even now in many parts of Northern Queensland reasonable hygienic conditions are obtained only as a result of opening up the country by settlement.

To-day Papau is where Australia was one hundred years ago, with the additional handicap of a worse climate, a more difficult seaboard, and the fact that some of her best products must come into competition with those of tropical Australia. Her compensations are that she starts her career over one hundred years ahead of her elder sister, and consequently can call on science, electricity, and steam, to aid her development, and can look

to the ever-increasing wants both of the Western and the swiftly awakening Eastern worlds to find markets for her wares. Nor need her tropical climate be any fatal bar to her onward progress, for her native population is both numerous and agricultural in its instincts, and only wants firm, honourable, and kindly handling to develop qualities of at least comparative industry which would be alike helpful to agricultural development, and the material and moral good of the natives themselves.

Her rainfall is as a whole regular and abundant, while as regards her rivers and general water conditions she compares most favourably with Australia.

Less than one hundred—or to be absolutely exact, ninety-four years ago, Governor Macquarie, then ruling over what is now South Australia, Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales, wrote in the bitterness of his soul an official report on those districts, of which the following is an extract:—

“I found the colony barely emerging from infantile imbecility, and suffering various privations and disabilities; the country impenetrable beyond forty miles from Sydney; agriculture in a languishing state; commerce in its early dawn; revenue unknown; threatened with famine; distracted with factions; the public buildings in a state of dilapidation, and mouldering to decay;

the population in general depressed by poverty ; no public credit or private confidence ; the morals of the great mass of the population in the lowest state of debasement ; and religious worship almost totally neglected.”

And to-day—well, the Conservatives call the Socialists rascals, and *vice versa*, while the self-dubbed Liberals are sorry for both ; but taken by and large, I doubt if the caustic old Pro-consul would write us down as short-coated imbeciles. If we have privations and disabilities they are mostly of our own making, and we can generally do our own mending. We have left no space uncharted within the wash of our encircling seas. Each year the plough drives deeper into the heart of our virgin lands ; commerce has merged from dawn into the fuller light of wealth-compelling day ; our revenues expand with each succeeding year ; and soon irrigation and a more systematic storing in our years of plenty will banish famine from our sand-swept deserts. True we are distracted by factions, or rather most of our Governments are, but given good seasons we can stand it, if they can, while if we have bad, the most scientific system of political economy ever evolved is as useless as a Chinese cracker for a rain compeller, and from an industrial standpoint nothing else is worth getting distracted about. Our public buildings are solid guarantees that we are neither depressed nor, indeed, poverty-stricken. Why

should we be, when we are about the richest people *per capita* in the world ! As to our morals, well, I suspect they are as good as our neighbours', and perhaps better than some of those who cry out against them ; while, if we don't crowd the churches to an uncomfortable extent, we fill the hospital boxes to the brim, and worship God by feeding the hungry and ministering to the sick and suffering, be their call from the ends of the Earth.

So, looking back to Governor Macquarie's vivid word picture, which I have no reason to suppose was unduly overdrawn, and then turning to that which of my own knowledge I know to be in all essentials true, I feel that splendid possibilities also lie waiting in the womb of time for Papua.

No man could possibly write such a despatch from Port Moresby to-day as Macquarie penned from Sydney in 1813, nor do I imagine any man will be able even one hundred years hence to point to a progress so splendid as Australia's has been, but much scope for noble achievement lies ahead of Papua's children, both native born, and adopted, and I believe they will yet build it into an outpost of the Commonwealth, strong, self-contained, united, and free from all reproach of cruelty or wrong.

THE END.

## APPENDIX.

### LAND IN PAPUA.

It is only possible to lease Crown lands in Papua, as the Government will not sell. Leases are issued for periods not exceeding ninety-nine years, and the terms are most liberal. Crown lands are classified: (A) Those fit for agriculture, and (B) lands not suited for that purpose, such as grazing country. No survey fees are charged, but a deposit must be paid, £1 being the amount for 100 acres or less, £2 for 100 acres to 500 acres, £5 for 500 to 1,000 acres, and £10 for over 1,000 acres. For agricultural land the rent is fixed at 5 per cent. on the unimproved value. No rent, however, is payable for the first ten years, and for the second ten years the payment is not to exceed 6d. per acre. The unimproved value will be appraised every twenty years during the lease, and the rent determined accordingly, and if the latter should be raised by more than one-third, the lessee may disclaim the lease and receive compensation for improvements. For Class B lands no rent is chargeable in the first ten years, and not more than 10s. per annum for every 1,000 acres during the second ten years. After that the rent is fixed at 2½ per cent. on the unimproved

value, appraised every twenty years; but, should it be raised by more than one-quarter, the lease may be thrown up and the lessee receive compensation for improvements.

All the leases are subject to improvement conditions. On agricultural leases one-tenth of the area is to be planted with approved plants within the first two years, one-fifth in five years, two-fifths in ten years, three-quarters in twenty years, and for the remainder of the term three-quarters are to be kept planted. On pastoral leases the land is to be stocked within ten years, and be kept stocked, twenty head of cattle or one hundred sheep or goats to be maintained to the square mile.



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